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MACMILLAN'S COMMERCIAL SERIES

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THE SCIENCE AND ART  
OF  
SALESMANSHIP

BY

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CLEVELAND, OHIO

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1921

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Set up and electrotyped    Published July, 1916.

**Norwood Press**  
J. S. Cushing Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.  
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

## PREFACE

EVERY ONE has something to sell, and the ability to market his commodity or services often determines the measure of his success. In the preparation of the following text several objects have been kept in mind, among which are the following: to discuss the subject for those who are beginning the work of selling as well as for those who have had experience; to provide a preparation which will fit pupils in secondary schools to enter upon the kind of selling they are most likely to do; to provide illustrations from a variety of sources; to present the material in acceptable English; to render unnecessary much of the time and expense of department stores in training graduates of secondary schools for their work; to suggest to persons of all classes, whether their contribution to society be in the form of commodity or service, the principles which will enable them to secure the most favorable hearing.

The course herein presented is the result of a process of development extending through several years of class instruction and close association with a number of large modern business organizations. That the objects mentioned above have been attained is indicated

by the testimony of persons who have taken the course and have reported that it has been found of great value not only commercially but also, to an almost equal extent, socially.

The method of instruction which requires members of the class to report to the class their observations of actual sales, after sufficient ground has been covered in the text to give them a fair idea of correct principles, will be found to add to the interest and to fix many of the fundamentals in their minds. To this can be added with much profit demonstration sales, competitive sales by individuals in the class as well as illustrative sales and addresses by practical salesmen.

The writer desires to express his appreciation for the courtesies extended in the preparation of the manuscript by the Halle Brothers Company, The Wm. Taylor Son & Co., The Lockwood, Luetkemeyer, Henry Co., The Lindner Co., The Day Varnish and Paint Co., The Sherwin-Williams Paint Co., The Cleveland Hardware Co., The Gregg Writer, the John Wanamaker and the Strawbridge and Clothier Stores. He has also to thank many others who have been more than kind in many ways.

S. R. H.

March 15, 1916.

## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THE first commercial schools in America were the private business colleges, so-called, which were organized during the second quarter of the nineteenth century and gave short courses in penmanship, bookkeeping, and commercial arithmetic. About 1870, the same schools added shorthand and typewriting, which led naturally to an emphasis on spelling and business English. Commercial instruction in public high schools, at first with short, and then with longer, courses, began about 1880. There was also established the endowed private school with a longer course and a more liberal conception of business education than the business colleges had.

It is possible to require a large amount of work in bookkeeping and stenography and yet not get from these studies an adequate educational return. With the lengthening of the course the tendency has been to distribute earlier subjects over a longer time and to add more general studies along such lines as commercial geography, history, economics, accountancy, banking, transportation, advertising, and salesmanship. In a commercial school there is great danger of getting

into a rut, of doing the same thing in the same way, of allowing the educational inspiration of the school to go to seed.

The addition of new subjects offers the possibility of new interest and inspiration, but in order to have these realized, working materials must be available, preferably in the form of textbooks. Salesmanship is one of the newer subjects claiming attention in commercial schools. In teaching it there has been but a limited experience, a few courses having been offered in such cities as Minneapolis, Cincinnati, Cleveland, New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. This book is the outgrowth of experience in one of the above-named cities.

It was long held that one who would sell goods should go into the office either as a stenographer or bookkeeper and gradually work into salesmanship, but this has been found to present special difficulties. The two activities are distinct and often not closely related, so that many persons have not found it practicable to become salesmen after entering some other part of the business. Because of a personal touch with a large number of young men in clerical positions, the writer has repeatedly been asked to suggest ways in which they might prepare for transfer from the office to the salesmanship branch of business. But the person who goes into the office is likely to continue there or to pass from that work with difficulty.

While this is true, there is another truth of equal or greater significance,—that the person who tries salesmanship without any preparation is in danger of failing. This has compelled many mercantile establishments to maintain schools of instruction for future salesmen. Such a course as this book offers should give an insight into salesmanship and a professional attitude towards it which are almost indispensable requisites for success.

Mr. Hoover's book commends itself as a straightforward presentation of the principles of the subject. It fairly conforms to the ideals of science as *knowing* and of art as *doing*. The book is designed to present salesmanship in general and to leave to the future salesman the application of general principles, rather than to give many specific directions, which are not applicable to new situations. The book is thus a treatise for purposes of discussion and application, rather than a set of rules on the subject which it presents.

Undeniably the richest rewards of business are in the salesmanship rather than in the office end. The stenographer and bookkeeper soon reach the absolute limit of their positions. A salesman, however, has no limit. He is selling service, and the more of it he can transfer, the greater good will he accomplish both for the constituency to whom he sells and for his employers. This statement is true alike of wholesale and retail salesmanship, and is applicable to the work of

the commercial traveling man and the salesman in a department store.

Salesmanship may appear different when practiced in the small retail business, in canvassing, in a department store, or by a commercial traveling man. But, fundamentally, the work is the same and calls for the same play of mind on mind, the presentation of convincing arguments, and the forcing of decisions. In the discussion of principles in this book, illustrations have been drawn freely from the experience of traveling salesmen, canvassers, and retail salesmen of various sorts. For directness of statement and simplicity of presentation the word "salesman" is used throughout, even in the many cases where the person referred to is a saleswoman.

Mr. Hoover's book is essentially a class book and offers the opportunity to extend commercial education to a field in which there is a large demand for trained helpers and a good remunerative return for those who possess skill. As a science, salesmanship can be and should be better understood by those who are to practice it. As an art there is need of reviewing and rendering more definite the best approved experience. It is to the accomplishment of these ends that "The Science and Art of Salesmanship" sets itself.

It is furthest from the thought of either author or editor that a study of this book will make a successful salesman out of every one. The book sets forth some



of the principles which underlie success. Many other studies should supplement this. Then, too, such personal elements as character and industry will play a large part. The study of salesmanship is a sharpening of the edge of other powers and can scarcely fail to make the future salesman more intelligent and more successful in his work.

C. A. H.

March 31, 1916.



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**THE SCIENCE AND ART  
OF  
SALESMANSHIP**



# THE SCIENCE AND ART OF SALESMANSHIP

## CHAPTER I

### WHAT IS SALESMANSHIP?

#### **Definition of Sale ; Every One Something to Sell.**

Whether one is a grocer, a manufacturer of steel, a day laborer, or a physician, he has something to sell. Only the tramp or other parasite of society is not a salesman. In one case the thing to be sold is an article of food, clothing, or other commodity, while in the other case it may be the skill or knowledge of the laborer or professional man. In any event it is a complete sale when the salesman has received adequate consideration and has furnished the buyer a satisfactory value for that consideration. Both parties to the sale must be benefited by the exchange in order that it shall be a good sale.

**Store Experiences.** When one enters a store and asks for an article of which he is in need, he often finds the clerk totally indifferent as to whether he

secures it or not. If this were the attitude of the proprietor, the business would soon fail. Every salesman represents his proprietor or his firm in his contact with prospective buyers, and whether his salary is large or small should make no difference in his attitude toward prospects.

The customer frequently finds that the salesman or saleswoman (hereafter the name "salesman" will apply to both) waits for him to determine and describe just what he wants, and if he cannot do so, the clerk lounges behind the counter, looking at him with an expression of pity. If the customer can tell exactly what he wants, the clerk places it on the counter. What is selected is turned over to the bundle wrapper, and the money is sent to the cashier.

No salesmanship is involved in a transaction of this sort. The person behind the counter might just as well be a machine. Such a clerk is a mere order taker. No matter what his salary is, it is too large. Salesmanship is an unknown science to him, and when he has occupied place after place for years, he is no more a salesman than he was at the beginning.

**Salesmanship Not a Secret.** Many so-called schools of salesmanship intimate in advertising matter and prospectuses that they are in possession of some wonderful secret which will be transmitted by them for a consideration. This attitude is unwarranted

and unfair. There is no wonderful secret in salesmanship. It is the application of honesty, of good sense, and of a desire to serve, guided by the rules of psychology, and it is nothing more.



A SALESWOMAN SHOWING DRESS GOODS TO A PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMER.  
Floorman to the left in the background.

**Salesmen Not Such by Birth.** It is asserted from time to time that certain persons are "born salesmen." The inference one might draw from that suggestion is a great mistake. Whether "poets are born and not made" may be an open question, but

salesmen are not such by birth. One person may have certain characteristics which make it easier for him to approach people than it is for another; but almost any one who has an earnest desire to do so can learn to present his case in an attractive and persuasive way, and to that extent may become a salesman. Of course all will not be equally successful in selling, any more than all are equally successful in any other profession. The fact that one has taken a course in a school of law or medicine does not guarantee him a successful career as a practitioner. It can only give him the necessary tools with which to carve out his career.

**Salesmanship a Result of Study and Practice.** Neither study alone nor practice alone will produce the best results in salesmanship. Theory and practice should be worked out together. Good practice should result from theory. Good theory should result from practice. This looks like reasoning in a circle, but it contains a large element of truth. The salesman who began years ago without any theory and is now successful cannot serve as an example for one who is beginning now, for great advancement has been made in the profession since he started.

**Salesmanship Is a Science and an Art.** The *science* of salesmanship includes all the knowledge one can gather from the experience of others and from the application of psychology. The *art* of salesmanship

is the application of this knowledge to the actual process of selling. There is no reason why a salesman should not be as much of an artist in his line as is the painter or the musician in another.

**A Sale Is a Psychological Process and Is Made in the Mind.** There are several steps in the process of a sale. First, *attention*; this is sometimes divided into involuntary and voluntary attention. *Involuntary attention* may be brought about by the merest accident. The prospect passes a store window and happens to glance in that direction; he reads a newspaper or magazine and accidentally notices an advertisement. *Voluntary attention* is given deliberately; the prospect determines to look up a given matter. ✓

Thereupon follows the third step, that of *interest*. The article has become attractive now, and the more it is studied the more attractive it seems, until the prospect comes to the fourth step, *desire*. The prospect may stop here for some time, but if the process goes on, he eventually reaches the fifth stage, viz. *determination* or *decision*.

Decision does not necessarily mean that the contract is closed. Many decisions are never carried out. The decision may involve sacrifice in deciding in favor of one thing. The prospect may have to decide against other things of the same or of other kinds. There must be one more step before the sale is completed. This is

*action.* All of these steps may take place in the mind of the buyer. They may be brought about by advertisement, possibly by circulars, perhaps by letters, but the most satisfactory way is by actual contact with the salesman.

**There Are No Trifles in Salesmanship.** Anything which helps or hinders the process above mentioned is important. Human beings are so constituted that what seems important to one is considered a trifle by another. The result is that almost everything is considered a matter of importance by some one. As a salesman is to come into contact with all sorts of prospects and does not know the personal peculiarities of any of them, he must be on the alert, for a matter small in his estimation may lose his prospect's favor and so destroy the good effects of his canvass.

A hardware salesman entered the store of a prospect whom he had never visited. The store was long and narrow, and the proprietor was near the front door. The salesman was smoking a cigar, and continued to smoke after entering the store. The proprietor would scarcely answer questions, and seemed to become more and more out of patience. Presently he broke into a rage and berated the salesman for smoking in the presence of a woman. The salesman then saw a young woman in the office of the store at the extreme rear of the room. Thus all chance of a sale was lost.

**Kinds of Salesmanship.** — Practically all kinds of salesmanship can be classified as *wholesale*, *retail*,



*agency*, and *canvassing*. Different methods are required for each kind. In wholesale and canvassing, salesmen ordinarily approach the prospect. Usually the retail salesman finds the prospect coming to him, while agency includes some experience of both kinds. The same principles hold in all cases. The rules laid down for one kind of sale will be found to apply to all.

**Salesmanship Is Not Trickery.** There was a time when the object of the salesman was so to hoodwink the prospect as to induce him to take what the salesman had to sell, and to get out of him as large a consideration as possible. In that day the buyer had to watch every word and move of the salesman lest he should be defrauded in the transaction. This was so fully recognized that even in law the buyer was met at the bar of justice with the cold comfort, "*Caveat emptor*," that is, "Let the buyer beware."

The day of *caveat emptor* and the ethics which encouraged or even tolerated lying and cheating in business has gone by. Tricks are no longer a part of salesmanship. There are many houses to-day which will discharge a salesman who resorts to misrepresentation or deception. A prominent department store has recently had printed and framed a number of copies of the following paragraph which were placed on conspicuous parts of the desks of officials and heads of departments:

### A LEAF FROM OUR POLICY

*Many of us are confronted by the necessity of deciding on matters that arise in the daily routine of business not covered by the "rules and regulations." For helpful aid in such cases remember one thing: this establishment puts no premium on clever tricks or cute business practice. Be open, frank, above all, honest. Decide on the simple laws of right and wrong — then you cannot go wrong.*

**Forcing a Prospect into a Purchase.** The mere fact of making a sale which will cause the buyer to feel after he leaves the salesman that he has been overpowered will bring about not only a repudiation of the sale and a canceled order in all probability, but will also put the buyer in an unfavorable frame of mind toward that salesman. He will avoid the representative and in many cases will be alienated from the house that the salesman represents.

"A young man came in here a few days ago," said the sales manager of a great factory, "and talked himself into a position in about twenty minutes, and talked himself out of it again in about five." "How did he do it?" "His approach was good. His credentials were satisfactory. His appearance and the impression he created led me to feel that I could use him. In fact I had almost committed myself. He evidently saw that I was favorably impressed, for he grew more confidential and began to boast of the ways in which he had succeeded in tricking prospects; methods by which he had overloaded buyers; means by which he had overreached customers, etc. I let him go on

for a few minutes and then gave him an application blank, told him to fill it out and send it to me by mail, and dismissed him. If he would trick and overreach customers, he would do the same to the house if he had the opportunity."

**Making a Friend Better than Making a Sale.** It sometimes happens that the salesman is doing better for his house by refusing to sell than he would do by making a sale. If he can thus secure for the firm he represents the confidence and the future business of a customer, it may be worth many times more than the value of an immediate sale in which the customer is induced to buy something he will afterward regret.

A professional man learned of the existence of a certain kind of protractor which was made in Europe but was for sale by a firm in Philadelphia. He had occasion to make a trip to Philadelphia some time later, and called at the place to inquire after this protractor. The salesman informed him that they had it, and brought it out for his inspection. It was all the man expected, and he asked, "Is this the best protractor made?" "No," answered the salesman, "there is a better one made in this city." "Do you have it?" "No." "Where can it be bought?" The salesman gave him the address of another firm in that city, and the prospect went to the address given.

On its face the above looks like a failure on the part of the salesman, but some months later the same professional man was in the market for a bill of mathematical instruments amounting to nearly a thousand dollars. The filling of the entire order was left in the hands of the salesman who had sent him to another firm for the better protractor.

A high school girl was spending her Saturdays in a department store, selling artificial flowers. An old lady came to her saying,

"I saw some very attractive-looking violets in the window, and as I am trimming a hat for my granddaughter I thought some of them would look well with my other trimming." "Well, madam," said the salesgirl, "those violets are pretty, but I hardly think they are suitable for your purpose. Those are the waxed violets for corsage wear, and they would soon fade if placed on a hat." "Thank you very kindly," answered the old lady, "I cannot see very well and could not tell exactly what they were." If the sale mentioned above had been made without explanation, the flowers would either have been returned when the buyer found they were unsuitable for her purpose, or they would have been used. In the latter case their speedy deterioration would have led the buyer to feel that she had been unfairly treated, and the reaction against the clerk and the store would have caused a far greater loss than the gain of the single sale.

**Salesmanship Must Be Up-to-date. Old Methods to Be Laid Aside.** There may have been a time when a salesman could sell his goods by telling questionable stories, furnishing meals, or filling his prospect with intoxicating liquor. Such practices are entirely out of place in up-to-date methods. The salesman is a man of business only, and he gives his prospect the credit of being the same kind of man.

A new salesman for a hardware manufacturing company was sent out over the territory previously covered by another. In one of the towns on his route he called on a firm which was doing no buying from his house. He met with a refusal, but before leaving the office of the purchasing agent he said: "I am a new man in this territory and in order to get some idea of the lay of the land I should like to ask a question." "All right, what is it?" inquired the purchasing agent. "Can you tell me why you buy

nothing from us?" asked the salesman. "Yes, I can," came the reply. "And will you?"

"Well," rejoined the purchasing agent, "perhaps it would do no harm. It's like this. The man who represented your company came in here about three years ago when he was new to the territory as you are now, and presented his goods in such a manner that I decided to give him an order. We were in need of a considerable quantity of your line just then, and it was a large order. After we had agreed on the items, specifications, and terms, and the order was being written for signature, he became quite confidential, and leaning over my desk, said: 'Now, Mr. J——, in order to show you that I appreciate a good customer, you just take a week off as soon as you can arrange matters here, come to Chicago; we will meet and put up at the L—— Hotel, and have a week of good time on the house.'

"I pushed a button under my desk which called an office boy, wrote a hasty note to the president of the company, and in a few minutes received an answer. This answer was just what I had asked the president to say, and was: 'Please delay purchasing further supplies until a little later, on account of a sudden change in plans.' Showing this note to the salesman, I explained that we must postpone the order which he had so nearly secured. I have felt ever since that we could not afford to do any business with a house which had that kind of representative."

**"Business Is Business" Does Not Mean That It Is Outside Morality.** If the expression "business is business" means that business is not a visiting or social association, and also that it is not a means of drawing upon religious affiliations, all well and good; but if the expression is made to cover practices which would not bear the light of the highest kind of ethics or the most searching morality, the sooner it goes out of existence

the better. The man who undertakes to make this trite expression cover acts of dishonesty or fraud is behind the times. He has outlived his usefulness in the business world. The sooner he is put on the shelf the better for the community in which he is trying to do business.

**Necessity for Definiteness and Positiveness of Thinking and Speaking.** — Nothing is more necessary to the salesman than to make his exact meaning clear. He should know just what his proposition is and just what it means, and his whole effort should be to make his prospect know the same. If what the salesman is trying to do is not clear in his own mind, he can never make it clear to any one else. He must be sure of his ground. He cannot afford to do any guessing. He must not make any statement which can be construed in two ways. There must not be any clouds to obscure the understanding between the salesman and the prospect. Neither of them can afford to throw dust into the eyes of the other.

**Salesmanship Is Service.** One can frequently buy an article at a lower price where the stock is poorly kept, where the surroundings are unclean, or where the salespeople are indifferent or impertinent, but the number of people who prefer to do their trading under more favorable surroundings is increasing constantly.

If one looks into a restaurant and sees that the windows are fly-specked, the table linen soiled, the

waiters untidy, the floor dusty, and other things in keeping, although he may notice that a meal can be secured for twenty-five cents, he is likely to pass by and enter another dining room where the table linen is clean, the waiters neat, the floor well swept, and the windows and dishes spotless, even though he may get no more food and finds it necessary to pay fifty cents for his meal.

We are willing to pay a little more in order to have the articles from which we make our selection arranged in an orderly way, to find surroundings which are clean and attractive, and salespeople who are courteous and willing, and who show a desire to help us in securing just what we want. It is this *service* which is building the successful business houses to-day, and the dingy shops with their crabbed, indifferent proprietors or salesmen are being crowded out of our busy thoroughfares into the back streets and alleys.

**Four Factors in a Sale.** The four factors in a sale are : *the salesman, the article to be sold, the buyer, and the process of the sale.* These will be taken up in detail as we proceed.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SALESMAN

**Personal Appearance.** The salesman should *look well*. This does not mean that he must be handsome; neither does it mean that he must always wear fine clothes. It does mean that his clothing should be neat, made of as good material as he can afford, up-to-date in cut and well cared for.

His clothing should be *clean*, especially his linen. A dirty collar or a frayed pair of cuffs has often created an impression which lost a sale. Grease spots on the clothing give the impression that the wearer might more appropriately be fed from a trough than at a table.

Miss Beatrice Carr, who has employed a large number of young women for an important Wall Street banking house, makes the following suggestions as to the *clothing and appearance of girls* employed in offices :

“ A woman in a higher official position can properly dress with a little more finish than a younger and less experienced girl. Personally I prefer an attractive one-piece dress. In this I voice the opinion of many business men whom I have heard speak on the subject.



"If anything, *good grooming* is even more essential than good dressing and has much to do with success. When a dozen girls apply for a position, it is invariably the neatest one who is engaged. I have had to refuse employment to many girls who were sent to me with excellent recommendations simply because they were what I term 'sloppy' or else were overdressed. Neither fault will be tolerated in the best business houses.

"When a girl appears with a small forest of feathers on her hat, a thin waist, low-cut neck, elbow sleeves, fancy slippers, several rings, and jangling bracelets, one knows in a moment that she is not to be desired during business hours, no matter what her abilities.

"Jewelry is always a great mistake. One does not object to a little harmless vanity in the form of a neat pin or ring, but generally the wearing of jewelry is in very bad taste. Any kind of cheap finery is a mistake. There is also a great tendency on the part of the younger women to follow the extremes of fashion. Instead of getting one good, durable dress, they try to keep up with the ever-changing styles by buying any number of cheap, tawdry garments of an ultra cut which neither look well nor wear to advantage and serve only to make the wearers conspicuous.

"Cleanliness cannot be emphasized too much. A ninety-eight-cent shirtwaist scrupulously clean is more to be desired than a soiled ten-dollar one. A plain, one-piece dress is always good, but in adopting it the

younger girl is apt to ornament it too much with frills and furbelows.

“Too much cannot be said against the very prevalent habit of wearing fancy shoes. During the recent heavy snows I noticed young girls on their way to work wearing thin silk stockings and low shoes with buckles. The mercury was below zero. Those girls were not keeping themselves in a condition to do good work. They were not only inappropriately dressed but they were endangering their health.

“When a girl is neatly and well dressed, she certainly can do better work. She can appear to better advantage, be less self-conscious, and far more attentive to business.”

Some one has said that the dressing of the extremities is the most important part of the clothing. A clean collar, a neat shine, a good hat, and a perfect pair of cuffs are perhaps more important than the quality of the suit or the fact that it has been recently pressed. A salesman of slovenly appearance is likely to give the impression that he represents a house which is inferior, and that probably he is a failure. Laundry work is cheap and so is shoe polish. An investment of a few cents will often win a dividend of many dollars.

**Personal Cleanliness.** But cleanliness is not a matter of clothes alone; it should extend to the skin. Perhaps no fixed rule can be laid down as to just how often the salesman should bathe, but it should be often

enough to keep him clean. If he is so unfortunate as to be afflicted with some disease that is liable to cause a disagreeable odor, he must be particularly careful. This applies to the teeth, to catarrh of the head, and to unusual perspiration of the feet.

The salesman must come into contact with people at close range. His nails should be clean; he should never appear with his "fingers in mourning." His teeth should be clean as well. He will want to smile on occasion and there should be no "yellow streaks" in his smile.

**Unusual Odors to Be Avoided.** There should never be a suggestion of liquor or tobacco on the clothing, the person, or the breath. The smell of liquor will alienate a large majority of prospects. The odor of stale tobacco smoke on the clothing or the reek of a tobacco chewer's breath causes nausea to many people, and they will think of nothing else while the salesman is talking. If the person and the clothing are clean, perfume is unnecessary; if they are not, it is a betrayal. These artificial smells are too often used to cover others which are disagreeable.

An odor which is very pleasant to one person may be extremely disagreeable to another. An additional fact must not be overlooked. The prospect may not be feeling perfectly well, in which case any of these unusual odors will be even more offensive. The wholesome odor of cleanliness never offends.

**The Salesman's Attitude.** In addition to these items of the salesman's personal appearance, there is also an important result to be obtained from his attitude in standing or sitting, and his manner of walking. He should stand erect, not with shoulders slouched forward nor with his torso hanging on one hip. The place for his feet is on the floor, and many a prospect has resented the carelessness of the salesman in putting a foot on a chair or a desk, and so marring the furniture in his office. The salesman sometimes becomes positively grotesque by allowing embarrassment or languor to control the position of his body. He should hold up his head, for by so doing he can talk better and think better, in addition to the fact that he looks one hundred per cent better.

The *pockets* are for carrying loose articles. One's hands should never be in them any longer than necessary to place these articles in them or to take them out. Toying with the watch chain, pulling at the ears or lips, rubbing the nose, or in any way handling the clothing or the face indicates a condition of mind that is embarrassed, afraid, or slothful.

In *walking* one should have a position very near that required in military drill, whether he is going to make it his permanent way of walking and standing or not. It will give him poise and command of himself. While *talking with the customer* he should keep his body in an erect and graceful attitude, neither stiff nor slouchy.

He should look at the prospect, and not allow his eyes to wander hither and yon while talking.

**The Salesman's Health.** The salesman who goes to his work feeling out of sorts because he is paying the penalty of a violation of one of nature's laws is far from the point of his highest efficiency. Discomfort of this kind usually falls under one of the following heads: *colds*, which are the forerunners of *catarrh*, *influenza* or *la grippe*, *tonsillitis*, *bronchitis*, *pneumonia*, *rheumatism*, *tuberculosis*; *decaying teeth*; *disordered stomach*, resulting in *indigestion*, *insomnia*, *dyspepsia*; *eye trouble*; *specific diseases*.

**Colds and Their Results.** Colds are usually caused by wet clothing, wet feet, sitting in a cool draft when overheated, throwing open the windows of a swiftly moving vehicle, discarding articles of clothing in order to cool off, insufficient underwear, sudden changes of clothing, exposure to the weather of parts of the body which are likely to be affected, especially the throat and chest, and improper ventilation. After long hours in a warm building the sudden transition to a cold or a damp atmosphere outside should not be made without adequate protection. Girls and women especially should have wraps which will properly protect the throat and chest. "An ounce of prevention" under these circumstances is worth many pounds sterling of cure in Colorado or New Mexico. Persistent attention must be given to ventilation. Most modern

stores are properly ventilated, and if the sleeping rooms of their employees were all well supplied with sufficient pure air, there would be fewer headaches and the sales force would appear in the morning much more cheerful and efficient.

**Care of Eyes and Teeth.** The effort to economize in time by reading or writing on a moving train or car or the use of the eyes by insufficient light or with the light in front of instead of behind the user are fruitful sources of eye trouble.

If one would practice economy in time, comfort, and expense, he should have a competent dentist examine his teeth at intervals not longer than six months. The use of a toothbrush twice, and a tooth paste or powder which the dentist can recommend, once per day will make for comfort and attractiveness.

**Proper Nutrition.** The energy and resilience with which one can enter upon his tasks depends to a great extent upon the facility and regularity with which his system is nourished. About four hours are required for the thorough digestion of an ordinary meal. If this process is interrupted by the habit of eating at all hours and constant nibbling at candies, pastries, and ices, the stomach returns to its work each time more slowly until it refuses altogether. Sour stomach, headache, intestinal disorder, and finally dyspepsia make life miserable and cause one to be so disagreeable in manner and words that others learn to avoid

him. It is safe to say that if the saleswomen of our department stores would save the nickels and dimes spent at the soda-water fountains and ice-cream tables, and would drink more pure water, the results would show in better health, increased sales, better pleased customers, and more rapid promotions.

**Alcoholic Drinks and Narcotics.** Alcoholic drinks of all kinds injure the stomach and other parts of the body more rapidly than nature is able to restore them. A stimulant is of no more nutritive value to the lagging brain or body than is the whip to a tired horse. Its net result is never anything but a deficit. Tobacco, cocaine, opium, and all other similar drugs have a deadening effect on the nerves, and are never of any value productively. No one can use them even moderately without reducing more or less his vital, mental, and moral efficiency.

**Loss of Reserve Energy.** A person accustomed to the use of drugs finds himself lacking in power of concentration when he would summon his forces to meet the problems and competition of selling or to combat the invasion of disease germs. In the time of epidemic, other things being equal, it is the user of drugs and alcoholic drinks who succumbs first. Nature provides the human machine a certain amount of reserve energy with which to meet unusual conditions. The user of tobacco, drugs, and especially of alcoholic drinks deliberately destroys his reserve.

**Powders and Patent Nostrums.** This chapter would be incomplete without a warning against the legion of powders, patent nostrums, and "medicines" of all sorts which are for sale and are advertised to cure all manner of diseases, real and imaginary. Whether it be merely the "tired feeling," headache, or some other ill, it is far better to consult a *physician first* than to undertake to diagnose one's own trouble, or to leave it to the haphazard, shotgun prescription of the corner drug store. Money will be saved and serious consequences avoided by placing the treatment of ills of the body, whether large or small, in the hands of some one who has made such treatment a careful study.

**Many of These Ills Preventable.** There is a popular notion that one must submit by the decrees of fate to a certain number of colds and a certain amount of other physical illness. Fate hasn't anything to do with it. About nine tenths of the cases of illness are preventable if one will exercise his common sense instead of giving way to his momentary inclinations and desires.

**The Salesman's Mental Attitude.** The salesman must have *self-respect*. Some people do not know the meaning of this term. It is not self-conceit, neither is it the kind of humility in which Uriah Heep prided himself. Self-respect keeps one a fit associate for himself. He determines to be worthy of the confidence of any one, and then lives up to that standard.



The salesman must be *courteous*. It has been said with a large degree of truth that politeness costs nothing and buys everything. One must manifest the kind of courtesy which will endure slights, and sometimes even insults, without retaliation.

A salesman will sometimes say, "I don't believe the house expects me to make a doormat of myself," but usually the one who says that is using that form of expression to cover his failure in the matter of courtesy. If the person to whom one is talking is discourteous or abusive, the farther he goes the more injury he does himself and the less one can afford to meet him on his own ground. Old Gorgon Graham says, "Fighting the devil with fire is the greatest mistake one can make because that is the one element in which the devil is most proficient." Meet the boor with courtesy; answer his rudeness with politeness; reply to his abuse and insults with silence. In following these directions one is not manifesting cowardice nor inferiority. When a yelping cur comes barking and snarling toward you, you do not get down on all fours and yelp and bark in reply. Jangling and yelling are no signs of bravery. The dog that barks loudest is too busy to use his teeth.

The courtesy developed must be the real article, not merely a Friar Tuck species of superficial veneer, which can be assumed in the presence of the prospect and discarded on leaving him. The salesman does not

know how soon nor from what direction the reaction will come.

A large paint company started a young man through territory which had been covered by a fairly successful salesman. The young man decided to make his first call on a hardware dealer who had been acting as agent for his line. He entered the dealer's store and found the proprietor near the front door. Handing him a card, the young man said, "I represent the S—— Paint Company."

The dealer looked at the card, ripped out an oath, and tossed it into a waste basket standing near. "Well, but Mr. H——," expostulated the new salesman, "you are our agent here, aren't you?" "I may have been," replied the merchant, "but you can't sell me anything made by that company. There's the line I carry," pointing to shelves of paint made by another firm.

The salesman started toward the place indicated when the dealer called, "No use to spend any time on it." "Well, I just want to see what's here," was the reply. The salesman found the paint made by his house thrown promiscuously under shelves and counters, dusty, and in the utmost disorder. He took off his coat and began to sort and clean the cans. He spent the entire afternoon at this work.

After dinner the salesman returned, and when he came into the store the proprietor was arranging some fishing tackle of which he had a fine assortment. The young salesman was an enthusiastic angler and soon had the dealer engaged in an animated and friendly discussion of the uses of the various kinds of tackle. The salesman found opportunity to say, "What a pity it is that some of us cannot become as enthusiastic in the matter of paints as we can in fishing tackle! The latter is called for only a short time in the spring, while paints are in demand all the year. By the way, Mr. H——, would you mind telling me why you discontinued our goods? Were you not well treated by the home office, or didn't the goods give satisfaction? I think I am really entitled to know."

"No, it wasn't the fault of the house nor of the goods," answered the dealer. "The man who used to travel for your house — by the way, what became of him?" "He isn't with the firm any more," replied the salesman. "Some circumstances arose which led to the acceptance of his resignation. I do not know just what they were." "Well, that's different," said the dealer. "I understood he had been promoted. You know we are twenty-two miles from the railroad, and one has to come and go over the road by stage. That man was in here some time since, and my sister happened to be in the store. She was visiting here. Her health is not good, and when she returned home, she went in the stage with your predecessor. He was a stout man who dressed conspicuously, and the only seat left in the stage when my sister entered was next to him. He occupied so much more room than necessary that she could scarcely keep her seat. They had hardly started when he began to smoke, replying to her request that he desist that 'He had paid for his seat and would smoke as much as he liked.' He kept it up the entire distance. I promised myself then that I would buy no more goods from a house represented by such a hog."

"Well, Mr. H——," agreed the salesman, "I don't blame you for feeling so, but do you think you can afford to let a personal matter stand between you and the best proposition you can find? Remember, the house knew nothing of this man's conduct, and it may be that some such occurrence was the cause of his resignation." "It doesn't make any difference to me," replied the dealer, "I'm through."

"Just one more suggestion, Mr. H——," continued the salesman. "Part of our present campaign is to line up the painters and contractors. We are carrying on a great system of advertising. To-morrow I shall see all the painters and contractors in this community. Some one is going to get this business, and I would rather it came to you than to any one else. Just look at what you have back here." "Yes, I know," answered the dealer. "You have done a fine job of arranging that stuff. It is in better

order than ever before, and I like your way of doing business. You are a persistent youngster, I'll admit."

"Well, Mr. H——," continued the salesman, "this is my first trip for the house, and this is my first call. You are a difficult man to reach, and this is Friday, the thirteenth of the month. I am not superstitious, but you can see that if I fail on the very first effort it will be rather discouraging. I believe if I can sell to you I can sell to any one. Now don't you think you can give me a chance to prove that the house has not been well represented, and let me supply the missing numbers in this lineup?" "I guess you've done it," concluded the dealer, and the order, though a small one, was the reopening of an account which continued valuable and permanent.

**Poise.** Directly in line with self-respect and courtesy comes *poise*. This is the element which makes it impossible for an untrained person to become too familiar. Shakespeare says, "There's such divinity doth hedge a king." What Shakespeare calls divinity is nothing more nor less than poise. A scene of dramatic action can readily be imagined. Two men are engaged in a fencing duel before an audience. They are in vigorous action. Another is standing at one side inactive. Far greater skill as an actor is required to be the bystander than to be one of the participants, and only a high degree of poise will save him from becoming a mere piece of stage furniture. Again, a certain successful actor is seen standing at the rear of the stage with his back to the audience. He is looking at a picture, and remains in that attitude for a comparatively long time. He is successful in holding his audience in absolute

silence because he has poise. Poise is a large element in what is often meant by the expression "blood will tell."

Poise can be illustrated to some extent in this way: A thousand pounds of wood and metal in an unorganized heap is neither beautiful nor artistic. The same wood and metal taken in hand by skilled workmen, and built into the form of a piano with tightened strings and wires, will give forth under the hands of a player an infinite variety of harmony. Poise marks the distinction between the person whose qualities and character are unorganized and the one who is highly organized.

**Cheerfulness.** An exceedingly desirable quality in the salesman is *cheerfulness*. Not that he should be forever smiling or grinning. This becomes disgusting to some prospects. But where the long-faced, pessimistic growler will secure one small order, the cheerful, optimistic salesman will take ten large ones.

A salesman had called many times on a buyer but had never received an order. He remained cheerful, pleasant, and courteous, and never failed to call again on his next trip. At length when he called, the buyer said, "Young man, you're such a cheerful loser that I'm going to tell you something. Don't stop coming. We have never given you an order, but one of these days something is going to drop, and if you are under the tree, you will probably catch it." Sure enough, it was not long after this when an order was forthcoming, and others followed steadily thereafter.

**Faith.** The salesman's success will depend in large measure on his *faith*. This means his faith in himself,

in his house, in mankind in general. He should believe that what another can do, *he* can do. He should believe in his capability and integrity. This will help him to believe in the honesty and sincerity of other men. Of course he must not be gullible. He must not accept every story that is told him, but he must believe that business men as a rule are men of honesty and truthfulness; that men keep their contracts and redeem their words. He must believe that his house is an honorable institution, that his goods are good goods, that the price he makes is a reasonable one, and that he can sell these goods, and is doing a kindness to the one to whom he sells them.

**Hope.** When the salesman undertakes to sell, he must have *hope* also, but hope must be based on faith shown by works. Hope will never be realized by mere wishing. The one who wishes sits in idleness, and dreams; the one who hopes goes out with earnestness and energy, and it does not require the gift of prophecy to know which of these will realize his desires.

**Enthusiasm.** This brings us to the element of *enthusiasm* which the ancient Greeks described as a "soul on fire." It is a part of the make-up which a salesman must have. It cannot be put on; it must be a development from within. Enthusiasm carries the salesman to his work, through his interviews, and through the day as the steam carries the locomotive or as electricity drives the motor.

**Persistence.** With all of these there must be *persistence*, but right here there is some need of modification. Mere persistence without tact and judgment may very easily become a bore and a nuisance. The peddler at the front door is often very persistent, but his persistence is without common sense. Some one has told him he must be persistent, and he has not sufficient judgment to know when and how to apply that quality. If one discovers in selling that persistence along a line on which he is working is becoming tiresome to a prospective customer, he should change his method. He need not stop, but he must approach from a different angle.

A salesman in a wholesale line started out to canvass his territory, and arrived in a town where there was a retail house to which he had not previously sold. Another salesman in the same line met him at the hotel. "Where are you going?" asked the second man. "To see the C—— Co. buyer," said the first. "No use; I was up there yesterday," was the rejoinder. "They aren't going to buy anything until later in the season." "Well, there's nothing like trying; I'm going up there anyway," replied the first. "Here's luck," and "Thank you," closed the conversation.

The salesman was admitted to the office of the buyer, and was informed that the firm had decided to wait until later in the season before buying anything. "All right; but I'm here now and must remain a few hours; can I not show you my line?" said the salesman. "There's no use in wasting your time and mine," replied the buyer. "We shall not buy at present, and it seems that a plain statement of that fact should be enough."

"Just a moment, Mr. C——," answered the salesman. "There's another side to the matter. If I were in the retail business, and a

wholesale house did not send its salesmen to show me the newest and latest things in its line, I should not consider the treatment fair nor courteous. You are under no compulsion to buy at this time, nor at any other for that matter, but we are undertaking to give you the kind of treatment and opportunity to which we consider the trade entitled." "All right, Mr. M——," yielded the buyer, "we'll have a look at your samples."

When Mr. M—— left the store and returned to the hotel, he was met by the salesman who had given him the warning, and who greeted him with, "Well, what did I tell you?" "It doesn't matter; the joke's on you," rejoined the persistent salesman, and Mr. M—— showed him an order for six hundred dollars' worth of goods. "Well, I don't know how you did it," answered the unsuccessful one, "but come in; here's where I pay for the dinner."



## CHAPTER III

### THE SALESMAN — (*Continued*)

NUMEROUS other items bearing on the salesman's success call for consideration, among which the following may be noted :

**Luck.** The idea must be thoroughly fixed that so far as salesmanship is concerned there is *no such thing as luck*. The salesman should never rely on the possibility of any but bad luck, and always be on the lookout for that. Such an attitude will be an excellent preventive. Good luck is simply a thorough readiness for every opportunity.

**Having a "Pull."** The employee who claims to have a "pull" with some one in authority is usually misrepresenting the situation. In the rare case in which he is telling the truth he betrays the fact that his employer does not know the first principles of business. The only pull that is of any permanent value is that produced by hard work, close application, and watchfulness for every opportunity.

**Success a Process of Building.** Right here let it be put down as an invariable rule that the salesman's success is accomplished by the process of building, not

*by tearing down. If a man were to come out in a business square and make a complete job of pulling down every building in it, the net result would be wreck and ruin. He would have accomplished nothing whatever for himself. The same is true of the salesman who undertakes to pull down or detract from the reputation of another house or another salesman. If he accomplishes the thing, he has simply harmed others without in any way helping himself.*

A new man was appointed to take the territory of a salesman of metal unions. The previous salesman had made a success of his work, and naturally had many friends among his customers. He gave the new man the list of names and as much information as seemed desirable, and started him on his route. One of the first prospects on the list was regaled with a long story of the shortcomings and failures of the previous salesman. It so happened that this man was not only a business friend but also a social intimate of the man who was being so unnecessarily picked to pieces. The new man was a failure. The reason needs no comment.

Every salesman should avoid any reference to other houses or salesmen, for talking about them merely advertises them. This being true of other houses, it is true in a much higher sense of his own. He may not agree with its policy, but the forming of its policy is not his business. He is employed to carry out his part of that policy, and it is his duty to do that in a loyal, zealous way.

**Alertness.** Alertness is a strong element in the salesman's success. This applies not only to his attitude

during the process of the sale in order to know the thoughts of the prospect, and to meet his objections in most cases before they are expressed, but also to keeping a sharp lookout for new ideas, new methods, and new ways in which to present his case as he is going about his work. It goes even farther than this, and applies to his skill and ability in keeping track of what his competitors are doing, the means employed by rival firms, literature that deals with his line of work, and all other things pertaining to his kind of business. If a salesman had as many eyes as Argus, he would have to keep most of them open all the time. Having only two, his brain must take the place of the other ninety-eight.

**Procrastination.** One of the creeping sicknesses of many salesmen is procrastination. It is possible that in some Central and South American countries "*mañana*" (to-morrow) may be a fair watchword for the way in which some people do business, but it will never do in an Anglo-Saxon community. "Do it now" is the only safe motto for the salesman in America.

**Initiative.** Business men are constantly calling for employees who have *initiative*. No salesman will go very high in his profession without it. In simple words it means finding something to do or a way of doing things without making it necessary for some one else to point it out.

The salesman should never join the club which meets around the corner, or behind packing boxes, and

discusses the various meannesses of the house, or of the manager, in asking them to do things they were not hired to do. The one who spends that time in finding something to do or short cuts in doing things will have a desk in the executive offices when the members of the " Kickers' Club " are asking generous-hearted citizens on the street to help a poor fellow who is out of a job.

A new salesman was sent into Michigan by a large establishment which manufactures paints. His territory was large, and he was ambitious to cover it in a satisfactory way. After he had been at work a few months he received a letter from the representative of his company in the largest city of the state asking him to come to a meeting of company salesmen to be held in that city.

At this meeting a man began to criticize the new salesman very directly. "You are rushing around over your territory at an unheard-of speed," said he. "There is no sense in it. There is just so much work to be done, and you must make it go through the year."

"Not only that," chimed in another, "but your expense account to the company is simply an absurdity. The company expects its salesmen to spend six or seven dollars a day, and your account is making the rest of us look like a lot of grafters."

Others had still other fault to find, and the young man found himself in for a severe grilling. It developed that this was the sole cause for the meeting. When there came a lull in the firing, the new salesman arose and addressed the men present. "I am sorry I cannot look at this from your viewpoint. I am new in the field, and have a record to make. I take it that if I cover the territory given me in six months, the company will find something else for me to do during the other six. Perhaps the fact that I do not use liquor nor tobacco will account for a large part

of the difference between my expense account and some of yours, but I cannot ask for more than I actually use. If you have nothing else to say, I shall bid you good night."

Eleven years later the young man who was summoned before the self-constituted tribunal was at the head of the department of sales and distribution of the same company, with hundreds of men under his direction. One day there appeared at the door of his office a derelict who told a long story of hard luck and adverse combinations of the fates, and asked for almost any kind of a job.

"No," replied the head of the department, "you have attributed your misfortunes to every source except the true one, which is yourself. We cannot use you because you have destroyed your usefulness. Do you remember the meeting of salesmen you called to pull me away from my opportunity eleven years ago? The habits you had formed then, which you would have imposed upon me if you could have done so, are the fates which have brought your bad luck."

Like most men whose self-respect has been broken by the use of strong drink, this one then made a direct plea for money, and was finally given enough to take him to his home in another town.

**Concentration.** Another important quality is *concentration*. That means to do the thing, upon which one has started, thoroughly and efficiently while he is about it. No one can accomplish his best work if he tries to do several things before finishing any one of them. Julius Cæsar is said to have been able to write his memoirs while dictating letters to seven amanuenses at the same time. He is probably the one historical exception which proves the above rule. The salesman who does not have a definite aim, and does not concentrate his whole effort on its accomplishment, is like

people shooting into the air, and like them he will secure no game.

**Losing the Temper.** Of course the salesman will come in contact with people who will say unpleasant things, but he must so control himself as to keep from losing his temper. To quote from Old Gorgon Graham, "One cannot afford to lose his temper because that is the one thing which he can never pick up again where he lost it." One is never sorry for the hot, unkind things he didn't say, but he is sorry many times for those he did say. It is better to bottle up one's ill feeling and take it out on the woodpile or in some other form of physical exercise.

**Self-control.** This leads us to another quality which the salesman must develop. We have many emotions and many forms of expressing them, but he who holds the highest influence over others is the one who has most control over himself. If one cannot manage the person with whom he has the most intimate association, how can he hope to control another whom he meets only at intervals. It is a splendid thing to have powerful muscles and a vigorous personality, but over these the will must rule with absolute authority. Only then can the salesman hope so to influence his prospect as to bring him to his own way of thinking.

**Tact.** *Tact* has been mentioned earlier in these lessons. Some one has said that it is tact which enables

one to pull the stinger of a bee without being stung. One may not care to try this process, but it is much more to his interest to know that it is tact which secures from an irritable and explosive prospect a good order without setting off the explosion. It is tact which finds the prospect in an ill humor because of some blunder by a previous salesman, or some mistake of the house, smoothes out the difficulty, and secures a repeat order.

A young lady was attempting to buy a pair of shoes. The clerk showed her a few styles which she tried on but did not like. She said, "I don't care for any of these shoes, but I'll come in another day when I have more time."

"Now this shoe is the most popular we have in stock just now," said the clerk, "and you ought to take it. It looks perfectly lovely on your foot, and I know you'll like it." "No," said the lady, "I don't like it at all." "But," insisted the clerk, "I know you'll be sorry that you didn't buy it; it is such a fashionable shoe." By this time the young lady had lost her patience and was becoming angry. "But I don't like it. Please put on my old shoe."

"Just a minute," temporized the clerk, "I'll call the head of the department, and he'll be able to tell you more about the shoe," and in spite of the lady's objections, she called the head man who began an explanation of the good points of the shoe. Finally, seeing that the prospect was not interested, and was putting on her own shoe, he left. By lack of tact the clerk lost a sale and lost a customer, for the young lady remarked afterward, "I won't go to a store where they try to force goods on me against my wishes."

**Diplomacy.** Tact is a close relative of *diplomacy*, which consists largely in saying unpleasant things in

such a manner as to cover up the unpleasantness. It was diplomacy in the medical profession which placed the bitter medicine inside a sugar coating or a tasteless capsule. It is diplomacy which must be exercised in order to sell to a prospect an article at a higher price than that at which he bought it from your house the last time.

Diplomacy lays the emphasis on the desirable side of the question, and makes that appear so attractive that the prospect is willing to overlook some things about it that are less desirable. A good salesman must be diplomatic. He must not wear a green tie on St. Patrick's day when he is going to sell goods to an Orangeman. In the same way he must avoid many things which might give offense to his prospect and so lose his opportunity. It would be good diplomacy for the salesman who is able to speak German to hold part of his conversation in that language when he is trying to sell to a German customer.

In case of any prospect who speaks a foreign language the salesman can learn historical or geographical facts concerning the prospect's native land even though he may not be able to speak the language. Some manufacturing houses have been at a loss to account for the preference of South American purchasers to buy from German houses rather than from American makers of the same goods. The explanation is sufficiently obvious when some of the facts have been taken into account.



Catalogues printed in English, entire absence of American banking facilities, an attitude of somewhat arrogant superiority on the part of salesmen in contact with the Spanish-speaking buyer, and refusal to extend the customary terms of credit, are some of the reasons why this trade has gone elsewhere.

**Aggressiveness.** While closely related to persistence and initiative, *aggressiveness* contains a larger element of driving into new territory and along new lines. While it is important that the salesman hold his old customers and secure repeat orders, it is inevitable that here and there an old customer will drop off. The salesman's work must not stand still nor must it go backward. He must move forward. To do so, it is necessary to secure new customers, and this is where his aggressiveness is necessary.

**Patience.** To the qualities mentioned above must be added *patience*. The salesman must remember that while his former customers and friends know him, the new man knows nothing about him. Among both new and old he will find those who raise objections, find fault with little things, sometimes grumble, sometimes show ignorance which he may think inexcusable, but in all these cases his patience must hold out.

**Excuses for Failure.** The salesman must remember that neither the house for which he works nor the business world in general cares anything about the reasons

why he did not accomplish that for which he was employed. It is not of much consequence that one can explain to his own complete satisfaction how it was that he did not make the sale. It is not excuses that the house wants. Letters of explanation are poor substitutes for orders. The house doesn't care "how it happened." The thing in which it is interested is the fact that "it" should not have happened, for explanations of failures are about the poorest kind of literature one can produce.

On the other hand, the salesman cannot afford to raise situations with his customers which will require excuses or explanations. His honesty must be unquestionable, and his word absolutely dependable.

A new salesman met a customer who was ready to give an order if the goods could be delivered within thirty days. The salesman knew that the factory was sixty days behind its orders, but promised the goods as desired rather than miss the order. When the thirty days had expired the buyer wrote to the house an angry letter. The house replied with the statement that no promise of delivery within the time stated had been authorized. The buyer referred the house to the original order. This brought a sharp reprimand from the office to the salesman. The buyer canceled his order in a highly indignant state of mind, and the offending salesman was never able to make peace with him afterward. The lesson was an expensive one to the salesman.

**Ambition.** No salesman will ever reach his highest efficiency without *ambition*. Just where his ambition stops his efforts will slacken. His ambition may be

to become the head of a department, a stockholder in the firm, superintendent of salesmen, proprietor of a business of his own, or the possessor of enough money on which to retire, but ambition of some kind he must have.

**Promptness.** One of the most exasperating delinquencies a business man can have is the habit of tardiness. If one is planning a trip to another city, he may have an explanation as to just why he did not reach the depot to take the train until fifteen minutes too late, but the explanation does not bring back the train. If one has an appointment to meet a prospect at half-past ten, and arrives at eleven o'clock, his time has gone. It is some one else who is entitled to the later time. Explanations do not stop the clock. It should not matter whether an engagement means an order or a social meeting, whether he is to be paid for his time or not, he should keep the appointment, and be on time to the minute. A habit of promptness is a large factor in business success, and will extend itself to the keeping of both written and oral promises.

**Dominance of Expression.** The salesman will do well to be so thoroughly prepared that he is a first-rate authority on what he is selling. This will make him capable of *dominance of expression*. Mr. Thomas E. Dockrell, in his little book, *The Law of Mental Domination*, calls attention to the note of dominance as illustrated in the writings of the Bible. The statements

are positive, admitting of no argument, because the men who made them felt the tremendous importance of the truths, were filled with them to the exclusion of everything else, and were determined to place them before other men in the most telling way. As a result millions of men have accepted them, and have measured their lives by the standards therein set up, in marked contrast to the results of all other kinds of literature.

With this dominance there must be modesty and an entire absence of arrogance or of anything which resembles forcing the issue. Dominance is the result of knowledge, arrogance of pretense; dominance of conviction, arrogance of deliberation; dominance of a desire to serve, arrogance of an intention to exploit. Dominance is like a rifle loaded with a magazine of smokeless cartridges, arrogance like a shotgun with a charge of black powder and paper wadding. One should assert a fact so as to indicate that it is unquestionable. He must be very sure of his fact, and must be able to prove his assertion if it should be called in question.

A young man was very desirous of being sent out on the road as a salesman. He had studied the line of goods in the factory for three years, and knew it was the very best of its kind. He took a course in a correspondence school of salesmanship. When the manager started him out, he said: "Now you must go into this knowing it is a hard fight. It will require courage and all the energy you have." The young man smiled in a superior way. He knew it was an easy task to go among ignorant people with all

his knowledge, and sell them anything he chose to offer. He was out one week, and then returned to the manager with the confession, "I simply cannot sell anything, and I give it up right now." "Certainly," replied the manager, "you knew entirely too much when you started."

**The Salesman's Language.** In whatever part of the work he finds himself, the salesman's expression of his thoughts should be in clear, clean-cut, and correct language. The use of improper and ungrammatical construction never helps and often hinders a sale. The prospect who uses incorrect language prefers to hear that which is correct, and he who uses correct language is not willing to endure crude forms of expression.

The use of such contractions as "ain't," such colloquialisms as "before," in the sense of a short time ago, buying or borrowing something "off" another, "that much," etc., and the indulgence in the prevailing slang of the day are inexcusable in any one who has had the opportunity of life-long association with English-speaking people. If this is true of slang; it is very much more true of profanity and all forms of vulgarity.

A gentleman entered a tailoring establishment not long ago to order a suit of clothes. A young salesman of good appearance stepped up to him, and asked whether he could show him something. "Yes, I am looking for a suit," replied the customer. The salesman threw down several bolts of cloth, and picking up the folds of one of them, commented on its attractiveness in a sentence

punctuated with profane expletives. The gentleman turned and left the store.

A turkey buzzard is a fine-looking bird when he is up in the sky. He soars about like an eagle. Below him lie splendid fields of grains and grasses, gardens of flowers, orchards of fruits, and forests of nut-bearing trees. But the buzzard sees none of these beautiful things. His eye is fixed upon the fence corner away back yonder, where lies the carcass of a dead horse. Thither he flies, there he sits, and there he gorges to repletion upon putridity. Anon he heaves himself to the top rail of the fence. As a passer-by approaches, the buzzard does not move. He is not afraid, for the filth is as easily disgorged as it was swallowed, and he who approaches too near will have this demonstrated to his own regret.

There are a few turkey buzzards wearing human clothes who go about picking up all the nastiness they can find, and then cornering the unsuspecting victim, they pour it forth where he cannot get away. Any decent man or woman should rebuke these peddlers of venom at every opportunity. Their number is decreasing, but the sooner it is zero the better. A funny story is often an asset to a salesman, but vulgarity is not humorous. There is no wit in filth, and the foul-mouth is the filthiest of human beings.

**Loyalty.** The salesman should be perfectly loyal: loyal to his country, to his state, to his fellow employees,

to his house, to himself, and to the highest principles he knows. These he should be ready to defend, but all of them should be of such a character that they need not be flaunted in the face of some one who, he knows, would be offended. He is not a toreador but a salesman.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SALESMAN'S PREPARATION

**Education.** General Lew Wallace says in *Ben Hur*, "Past all question, every experience in life is valuable to us." To a salesman this is true of education of any kind. No course of study would be out of place. If he has had the opportunity of a high school education or of a college training, so much the better, but his preparation must not omit a thorough study of the business for which he is selling.

The salesman of dry goods, for example, should know the cotton industry from the planting of the seed through its harvest and manufacture. He must know where the various cotton fibers grow; what is the difference between that raised in Egypt and that raised in the inland Gulf States; why one is superior to another; what methods are used; what are the processes of dyeing and printing; what are the reasons for shrinkage, and so on.

In a similar way he must know the history of linen: where it is produced; what such processes as retting, breaking, hatching, combing, spinning, and weaving mean; why that produced in some localities is far



superior to that which comes from other places ; and why linen is superior to cotton goods. Likewise he must know the sources of wool, the different kinds, and reasons why some are better than others. He must know why wool is "warmer" than cotton or linen, what shoddy is and how it is produced, and what is the process of making felt.

He must also know the history of silk : whence it comes ; where it grows ; the life of the worm and its stages of growth ; the difference between wild and cultivated silk ; the methods used in spinning and weaving ; what causes the superiority of some kinds of silk ; the difference between Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and American silks. The application of the same kind of study to laces, carpets, alpaca, camel's hair, and the goods of all other departments is essential. All this indicates in a very brief way something of the line of study necessary for the salesman of dry goods.

**A Study of Salesmanship Necessary.** A study of salesmanship is also a necessary part of a salesman's equipment. This can be learned from books and from other salesmen, but, as has been intimated before, in these cases some particular method is likely to be overdrawn. If, however, one studies various methods and reads a number of books, he will find in them many suggestions that will help him much. He will discover, however, that his most valuable lessons are learned from the peculiarities and characteristics of the people

to whom he sells; in other words, a study of human nature. He will learn much by noticing the mistakes and wise methods employed by those from whom he makes purchases, avoiding their errors and profiting by their wisdom.

**A Study of Himself.** Meanwhile the salesman should not overlook another subject, which is the study of himself. This should be honestly made. There is a great deal of self-study which dwells on the good points and overlooks with very hasty glances the bad points of one's character or habits. The bad habits are the ones which need the careful study because their elimination will frequently require hard work. There is good authority for the suggestion, "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off," which means that though a habit or an appetite be as firmly intrenched in one's character as his right hand is attached to his body, when he knows it is injurious he should have the courage to put it away from him and the grit to see that it stays away.

**Where to Line Up.** The fundamental laws of health are sufficiently simple to be mastered by any one in a short time. Habits and temptations which violate them must be cut off. The rules of language are not difficult, and violation of them must be avoided. The way in which to destroy a bad habit is to create and cultivate a good one. This will require energy, persistence, and will power. The only question is

whether you have enough of these powers. The weak character says, "I can't help it," or "I was born that way," and blames the misfortune or failure on the traits of some ancestor: father, mother, or some one farther back. He then lies down, and lets his boat drift over the Niagara of some habit or weakness which destroys his usefulness. It is the man of strong character who lays down the law for himself, and then forces obedience to that law.

The sales manager of a large wholesale and retail house replied to the question as to why he had to drop men from his sales force in these words, "In three fifths of the cases salesmen are dropped for lack of knowledge; in the other two fifths for lack of energy."

**The Article to Be Sold.** Articles to be sold are, first, *tangible*; such things as can be seen, handled, and examined. Here would be classified real estate, chattels, wholesale and retail merchandise, stocks, bonds, and other articles of a similar kind. Second, *intangible*; such as advertising, transportation, storage, rent, professional services, and the like. In any case one must be very familiar with the history of the thing to be sold. This does not mean a merely superficial knowledge. In selling the article the salesman will find that one person knows certain facts in its history, while another person knows certain other facts. Nothing will destroy the prospect's confidence in the

salesman more quickly than to discover that *he* knows something about the article which the salesman does not know: hence the necessity for the salesman to know *all* the facts.

**Motives to Which a Line of Goods Will Appeal.** The desires to which his particular line of goods will appeal must be a part of the salesman's knowledge, and here he will find psychology playing an important part in his work. Do these goods appeal to selfish motives or to philanthropic ones? Can the best selling talk be made by suggesting the gain of money, the improvement of personal appearance, the gratification of appetite, the well-being of friends or members of the family, the protection of the home, the security of the future from danger or from want, or to some other strong need or desire? Perhaps the best method of gaining this knowledge is through experience, so at the beginning of one's work along a certain line he may have to feel his way for a while until he has gained enough of this knowledge on which to build.

**Brands under Which Goods Are Sold.** Whatever the article sold, the salesman must know the *brands* under which the same kind of goods is sold by houses other than his own. He must know what these brands mean. In some cases a house has arbitrary names for articles. One name indicates first quality, another name of the same kind of goods indicates second quality, and so on. There may be no other

way of distinguishing the quality of the goods. Manufacturing houses frequently make this kind of distinction by putting their own name on their first-quality goods, and then issuing inferior goods under other names, perhaps under the name of the retail house which sells them. An illustration of this is a certain make of carpet cleaner of which the best grade is issued under the name of the manufacturer, and inferior grades are purchased by retail dealers who are privileged, if they buy a specified number, to have any name they desire placed on the cleaner. It may be their own firm name or some such term as "The Best," or "Superior." The salesman must know what these are and what they mean. He must also know the prices at which articles can be bought and at which they ought to be sold. If the buyer suggests to him that he can buy articles of this kind at prices lower than those at which the salesman is offering the goods, the salesman should know whether the buyer is telling the truth or merely trying to "beat down the price."

**Beating Down the Price.** Every salesman has to meet the effort to beat down the price. Let it be understood from the beginning that it is an exceptional case, and it must be a rare one, in which the salesman should allow his price to be changed. Let him be assured that his price is reasonable, and then insist that it must stand. If he allows the buyer to beat his

price down once, he has opened a gate which he will find almost impossible to close. If the buyer can lower the price of one thing, he will insist on reduction on other things, and if he has accomplished that once, he will expect to do it again. Having found that the price is a variable quantity, he will never rest satisfied, for he will always think that perhaps he could have beaten it down still further if he had kept at it longer.

Not only so, but if this is done in case of one buyer, some other customer will learn about it. The same concession will have to be made to him, and so the salesman has started an endless chain of trouble for himself and for all other salesmen who are, or will be, connected with his house. Some salesmen seem unable to take a definite stand on prices and to maintain it. Such a failure is a great misfortune to the salesman and to the house which employs him. If the buyer demands such a concession, it should be met with a more detailed description of the quality of the goods. If he insists that he can secure the same goods at a lower price, the salesman should ask for the name of the brand so that he can produce the two side by side and show the superiority of his goods. Of course if the salesman does not have confidence in his own proposition or lacks a complete knowledge of his own goods, he is at a tremendous disadvantage at this point. John Graham, whom we have quoted before,

says, "What the salesman knows about his goods is a club for himself, what he does not know is a meat-ax for the other fellow."

**Knowledge of Sizes.** Among the many other things which must be included in the salesman's knowledge are the sizes in which his goods are made and how they compare with the sizes of other brands. This matter of size is often of great importance, as is shown in the shoe business. A very foolish notion has prevailed among some people that their feet look better if they seem unusually small, hence they have endeavored to crowd them into shoes anywhere from one to three sizes too small. Shoes used to be marked on the inside in figures and letters indicating the sizes and widths. These persons would call for a certain size, and in many cases would have a long argument with the salesman, sometimes refusing to buy, because the size demanded would not fit. To overcome this difficulty shoe manufacturers now place on the inside of the shoe a series of figures which mean nothing whatever to the uninitiated. The salesman must know that by certain subtractions from the first figures of this number he secures the size of the shoe, and in a similar way the width from the latter part of the number. He therefore fits the customer regardless of the size demanded, and avoids argument and dissatisfaction. The customer does not know the shoes are larger than those for which he asked. He simply knows they fit.

**Knowledge of Colors.** The salesman must know what colors will sell in his particular line of trade. The same goods will not sell in the same color or colors in stores that have a large Italian trade and in stores which sell almost exclusively to Americans. In one case combinations of brilliant yellows, greens, and reds, in almost unlimited profusion, will be found very desirable and will be bought readily, while in the other they would be considered impossible.

**Must Keep Up with the Styles.** The salesman must know *styles* also. These are prepared beforehand by manufacturing houses, and the salesman must have them thoroughly in mind, especially the wholesale salesman, for it is generally true that the retail salesman's selling talk is what he secures from the wholesaler while buying his stock of goods. In this case the wholesaler is not merely selling his goods to the retailer, but he is also furnishing the retailer with arguments to reach the consumer. It is not sufficient, however, for the salesman to know what styles are going to prevail in the large cities. He must know his territory so well that in case there are in that territory peculiar sects or communities whose styles do not change, or, if they do, remain a year or two behind those of the cities, he may be able to provide suitable goods for those peculiar people as well as for the ones who are up to date. •

**Knowledge of Ingredients.** To satisfy any inquiry the salesman must know the ingredients of the article



to be sold, even though he may not know the exact ratio in which these ingredients are combined. For example, if he is selling rubber goods, he must be able to answer such questions as: "Is this new rubber?" "Does it contain soda or any other material?" and so on.

**Probable Demand for the Article.** The salesman should know the extent to which the article he is selling is used or is likely to be used, what the supply of this article is, and whether it would be wise for the buyer to secure an unusual stock.

A millinery salesman started out with a line of velvet ribbon which promised to be greatly in demand during the following season. At the same time a number of other salesmen were sent out by the same house with the same goods. Within a few days letters began to pour into the office from all the salesmen except one. There was great uniformity in the contents of these letters. A New York house had covered the entire territory ahead of these men, and they were lamenting that every one was stocked with velvet ribbon. The exceptional salesman did not find conditions different from those that confronted the others, but he met them in a different way.

In the first town he was told, "R. & Co.'s man, of New York, was here a few days ago, and I bought a large order of velvet ribbon." "Is that so?" responded the salesman; "well, you did not make a mistake; velvet ribbon will be in great demand this season. It is an excellent investment. Everybody will be calling for velvet ribbon." "Yes, so the New York man said," replied the retailer. "Did you buy all your trade is likely to demand?" was inquired. "Why, I think not," said the prospective customer, "in fact I know that if the demand should be as great as

present forecasts indicate, I shall not have half enough." Not only was an order secured here, but on his trip this salesman sold one hundred and fifty boxes of velvet ribbon. The others sold scarcely any.

This merely indicates that if a salesman knows the outlook, he need not be frightened by the fact that some one has been over the ground ahead of him, and he must not throw up his hands and begin to cry. The one who meets a condition which seems unfavorable, if the thing which has been done is a good thing, should go it one better: if it is a bad thing, he should put his wits to work, and throw out the bad with something good.

**Knowledge of Conditions.** Another item of information which is necessary to the salesman is a knowledge of the conditions under which his goods are made. If a wave of popular resentment against child-labor in cotton factories is rising in his territory, he must know whether the cotton goods which he is selling are made in whole or in part by child-labor. If this form of protest is against the abuse of miners, he must know whether the coal he is selling is mined under the objectionable conditions.

**Samples.** The salesman's samples should be fully equal in character to the goods he is selling, but no better. No buyer is required to accept goods inferior to the sample. Even if he does so without saying anything, he will have dissatisfaction in his mind, and it would be better for him to refuse to accept the goods

than to have that feeling. If he refused, he might not carry resentment toward the salesman and a disposition to refuse another order as he will if he accepts goods that are not entirely satisfactory.



A SALESMAN'S SAMPLE CASE, SHOULD BE NEAT AND ORDERLY IN ARRANGEMENT.

**Handling and Displaying Samples.** The care of samples requires extreme watchfulness. They should be kept clean and in good order. They should not be allowed to become finger-marked, wrinkled, torn, frayed, rusty, or dull in appearance. In case of fine tools they should be kept wrapped in oiled paper, and in almost any case separate wrappings of some kind will be very desirable. In placing them in the carrying case they should be so packed that the handling of the cases by baggage men or express companies cannot throw them out of order, or mar or break them. In removing them from the wrappings they should be handled without undue hurry, and as though they were something for which the salesman really has a high regard. When placing them on display, they should be arranged in an orderly manner so that they make a good appearance. A buyer who finds the samples thrown together in a heap or in such disorder that the salesman cannot find the things of which he is speaking, will probably be impressed unfavorably by the salesman and his goods.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CUSTOMER

**The Senses.** Ideas reach the human brain through the avenues of the senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. The impressions thus made in the mind are more or less lasting as they are associated with previous impressions or are entirely new, as they are deeply interesting or only slightly so, as they are repeated many times or come but once, as they are held before the mind a longer or shorter time, and as the mind returns to them or allows them to pass out of recollection. The effort of the mind to recall an impression will of course depend to a great extent on the kind of feeling produced by its first outline. If that feeling was one of pleasure and satisfaction, the tendency will be to recall it often; if that first feeling was disagreeable, the effort will be directed away from it. The salesman's use of these facts should be such as to make as many of the customer's senses as he can use carry pleasing impressions to the buyer's mind. By the expressions he sees on the face of the customer he must judge whether he is presenting his ideas too rapidly and whether they are producing the effect he desires.

**Temperament.** *Three kinds of temperament* are recognized by psychologists: the vital, the motive, and the mental. Persons of the *vital temperament* are characterized physically by an appearance of being well-fed. The head is usually round; the person likely to be stout. His appetite is good, and he may like to drink as well as to eat. He loves life; has a strong fear of disease and death; is inclined to be selfish; will spend money on the things which minister to his appetites and passions; otherwise is inclined to be stingy; desires to be considered a good companion without having it cost him much. He is likely to be found in such kinds of business as do not require much exertion, either physical or mental. In the predominance of this temperament are found those who approach nearest to the perfection of physical beauty. Persons of the vital temperament make good prospects for patent medicines, food supplies, and other things which appeal to comfort and pleasure.

The *motive temperament* is indicated by large physical frame in which there is the appearance often called "big-boned." Persons of this temperament are frequently rough in appearance, with great muscular development, high cheek bones, large hands and feet, and roughly marked features. These are the people who do the world's work. They are not handsome, but are usually strong and healthy. They are never satisfied unless they are busy. They will be found

among laborers, machinists, engineers, farmers, and throughout the operative and executive departments of commercial enterprises. They make good prospects for machinery and tools which accomplish their work more satisfactorily, and for things which pertain to the necessities of life.

Persons of the *mental temperament* are likely to be small, quick, nervous, constantly in motion, sharp of feature, with pointed nose, small hands and feet, bright eyes, and high foreheads. They do not like physical exercise, but are absorbed in books, technical studies, and other mental processes. These are scholars, writers, inventors, and members of other professions. They are the people who will buy books, magazines, scientific works, and instruments.

The above are the main lines of temperament, but it is extremely rare to find individuals who fall entirely in one of these classes. Nearly every one is the result of a mixture of temperaments. The person is counted well-balanced when the three temperaments are about equally developed in him. Usually one of the three will predominate over the others. It is the salesman's business to determine which of these predominates in his prospect so that he can make his appeal along that line.

The different kinds of prospects mentioned herein do not exhaust the list. They are merely suggestive. Nor should one get the impression that he can classify

all prospects as he would catalogue various bolts. Of course he will generally find the man he meets as a prospect straightforward and matter-of-fact. This man should be met on exactly the same ground. The salesman should be perfectly frank as long as he can. It is only people with some kind of mental or moral "squint" whom he must approach from an angle.

**Controlling Motives.** In addition to differences in temperament there are motives of many kinds. One buyer will be extremely *selfish*. In order to reach him the salesman must show wherein the article in question will return to the buyer more than it cost him. He must see a distinct selfish advantage, and when he does that, he will probably buy. If it is real estate, he must see a speedy increase in value, a possibility of turning the property over to another buyer at an advance, a prospect of natural riches, or something of the kind. If he is a manufacturer, he must be shown that the machine which is being offered him will save him money or enable him to produce larger results. Of course these things must be shown to the man who is not supremely selfish, but greater emphasis must be laid on them in the case of the man who is.

The prospect may be *cautious*. In that case it must be demonstrated to him conclusively that he is not risking a loss in buying this article. His confidence must be secured. He must not be rushed. A sale



cannot be made in a hurry to a cautious buyer. The salesman should come back to him two or three times. After each interview he will have gained a little more confidence.

Another prospect may be *stubborn*. He may be one of those mistaken mortals who think they have a great amount of will power when they have only "won't power." It never occurs to them that the big boulder in the fence corner has more of immovableness than any man who passes by, and so they pride themselves on the possession of this "fool's gold." In this case great care is necessary to prevent the prospect from forming an adverse opinion at the beginning of the canvass. If by some means he has already formed that opinion, and takes his first opportunity of expressing it, there will be no use in trying to combat it. Argument will only strengthen his opposition. He must be approached from a new direction, started along a different line. He must be given an opportunity to say, "Well that, of course, puts it in a different light," or, "That is altogether a different matter." Once the stubborn prospect has been secured, he will stand for a proposition just as vigorously as he stood against it.

The *vain* prospect really does know some things, but he is so inordinately desirous of publishing his knowledge that the salesman must make way for this display of vanity. He can be approached with such expressions as, "Of course you know," or, "As you have long

ago discovered in your business experience." The salesman's suggestions and the information he desires to convey can then be woven in as though they were merely reminders of what the prospect is already supposed to know. His vanity may be disgusting, but the salesman wants orders, so he may find it necessary to tickle this vanity.

"Appeal to the buyer, and let him father you," said an experienced salesman of a great paint factory. "I went to see a dealer in hardware and paints not long ago, and found he was not in a very receptive mood. 'Mr. F——,' said I, 'I have a complicated lock on my front door. It is supposed to do a lot of things and I don't doubt that it will do all of them — when it works. But it doesn't work. I wonder whether you would be willing to spare a little time to tell me something about such a lock.'

"The dealer's pride in his knowledge of his business was touched. He was not only willing but pleased to explain the mechanism of locks. By the time that had been accomplished he had established a relationship with the salesman which made it easy for the latter to present his case and to secure an order."

Of a different sort, though related to the preceding, is the *conceited* prospect who merely pretends to know. Before him the salesman should appear very humble. It will be necessary for him to minimize his knowledge in the presence of the prospect's superior (assumed) wisdom. The salesman will do well to ask questions in order to learn what the prospect thinks he knows so that the canvass can be fitted to the new ideas. In this way the prospect can sometimes be induced to

work himself into an order. Perhaps nowhere more than in the selling of goods is it necessary for one to be "all things to all men," so long as he does not have to sacrifice a real principle.

The *argumentative* man likes to argue for the sake of argument. He should have the opportunity. Let the salesman lead him away from the main line of his canvass, take one side of an unimportant question, and present it fairly well—but not too well. The prospect must win his side of the argument, and the salesman must gracefully and freely concede that he has won it. He will feel so good over the result that the selling canvass can be presented and his order secured on the strength of his good will. But the subject of the argument must never be religious or political. Either is too dangerous.

The *cunning* prospect must be allowed to think he is getting the better of the salesman. Some mystery about the method of talking with him is desirable. At some point of particular interest the salesman should look around carefully, and then whisper a statement into his ear. This may be some suggestion as to how he can use or market this article in some peculiar way. When the prospect has shown the drift of his thoughts and imagines he has set the trap which will catch the salesman, the latter should walk right into it, being sure he has neutralized it in some way before doing so.

The method by which the prospective customer decides one way or the other varies all the way from the sudden, impulsive action of the emotional mind to the careful, protracted balancing of evidence by the judicial type. In some cases the effort to decide seems almost painful. The salesman who has taken his prospect's measure accurately will be able to determine whether to present his case through sentimental channels to the impulsive, untrained mind of his buyer or to approach with a suggestion which will crowd all other considerations out of his mind in favor of the one thing for which he desires the article, or to array point after point in favor of his proposition in logical order in dealing with the highly organized mental equipment of the educated listener.

After all is said and done there will be cases in which it is impossible for the salesman to discover why he cannot reach the closing point when there seems to be nothing tangible in the way. In such cases it may be wise to make a clean breast of it and ask for the reason.

A cash register salesman found no difficulty in interesting a grocer in his proposition. There was apparently no objection to the purchase of the register, but the salesman could not bring him to the point of giving the order. The second and even the third visit made no further impression. At last the grocer said, "This thing looks all right and I believe what you say about it, but I cannot buy it."

"In that case may I ask the reason?" inquired the salesman. "If I have failed in any way, or if there is any fault with my goods,

I should like to know it." "You are not at fault at all," replied the grocer, "and your goods are all right. It is simply this. I have been in business here a long time. The man you see yonder has been in the store fifteen years. He would not understand if I were to put in a cash register. He would probably think I suspected him of dishonesty. Even if he did not speak of it, I am sure it would hurt his feelings, and I wouldn't do that if you gave me the thing for nothing."

At the home of the employee after the day's work was done the salesman made the following approach: "I was talking with Mr. W—— to-day at the store and he expressed so high an opinion of you that I don't believe I ever heard an employee more complimented." The explanation of the advantages of the appliance soon convinced the clerk and he became the active ally of the salesman in securing its installation in the store.

The psychological principle underlying this experience is manifested by the mother toward the child who is in some way unfortunate. Far from causing the mother's love for that child to diminish, the misfortune usually has the opposite effect. She is willing to do more for the one for whom she has already done most.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PROCESS OF THE SALE

**The Pre-approach.** By the *pre-approach* we understand everything the salesman can do in preparing himself and the customer for their meeting. This will include advertising, circular letters, and personal correspondence. It will include also all that has been said as to the knowledge of his goods, the materials which produce them, the sources from which these materials come, the processes of production, comparison with the goods of other houses, conditions under which they are made or raised, and the persons concerned in all these processes.

If the salesman is selling some kind of machine, he should spend enough time in the factory or the shop to enable him to make the machine, to take it down and reassemble it easily, expeditiously, and correctly. If **parts** are replaceable, he should be able to show just how the replacing can be done.

He should be able to demonstrate the value of his article from an artistic as well as from the utilitarian side. For example, if the salesman is selling chinaware, he should know the history of that kind of ware; why

one variety is translucent and another opaque; the difference between naturalistic and conventional decoration; the processes of painting and firing; sources from which paints can be secured, etc. He should be able to tell, without looking at the back or on the bottom, the source from which the china comes; what is the meaning of the marks on the bottom of chinaware; why it is called china rather than japan; what is the difference between makes of china; what is the significance of such words as "Haviland," "Belleek," and "Rookwood," and where these names originated. All these things are merely the *a b c's* of chinaware. The highest success involves preparation which is not a matter of weeks nor of months but of years. A salesman of laces and draperies in a certain large department store has a library of over three thousand volumes on the line of goods he sells. It is a delight to hear him talk about his goods. Incidentally he receives a large salary.

**The Salesman's Knowledge of the Customer.** In approaching a customer, the salesman should if possible know his *name*. This should be pronounced as the owner pronounces it, no matter how fantastic that pronunciation may be. The ability to remember and to associate names and faces is a great asset to the salesman. Under no circumstances should he address a woman as "Lady" nor a man as "Mister-ah." If he is to approach the prospect in

the latter's place of business, he should know the name of the man whom he wishes to see before he enters. If he should approach the wrong man, he can be easily righted when he knows whom he wishes to see. If he does not know the name, and happens to address the man he desires to approach, he is in a very awkward position, hence the need of his knowing the prospect's name beforehand.

In addition to this he should know his prospect's *method of conducting his business*. Nearly every business man has some particular thing upon which he spends much of his time and energy because he believes it to be very important. If the salesman can talk intelligently concerning this method, he has won his way to the attention of his prospect. If the prospect has personal peculiarities and foibles, a knowledge of these is valuable to the salesman, so that he may not run counter to something which is in line with his opportunities. If he has some knowledge of the history of his prospect's business, he adds still further to his equipment. If he knows, for example, that this particular house was founded in 1850, he can refer to its long-continued success in an unostentatious way, and can frequently win attention and consideration from a prospect who might not otherwise give it. If the business is new, he can refer to the phenomenal growth it has attained in so short a time.



The prospect's *standing in the community* where he does business is an important element in determining how much the salesman should undertake to sell to him, and the amount of credit he should be ready to allow. Such questions as: Does he pay his bills promptly? Does he discount his bills? Is he considered close or too free in money matters? What are his personal habits? Does he drink, gamble, or play the races? are important items of the salesman's knowledge.

One of the best means of securing entrance to the good graces of the prospect is a knowledge of his *avocations*: what does he do in his spare time? If he is a merchant, an avocation may be the raising of chickens, the invention of some machine, or music. Whatever it is, the ability to talk along this line will frequently interest the prospect more than a conversation on such a vividly exciting topic as the weather. Of course all this pre-approach knowledge is to be supplemented by the salesman's study of his man along the lines of temperament and controlling motives while in his presence.

**The Salesman's Mental Attitude.** Probably the greatest hindrance to the salesman, especially to the new one, is *fear*. Just why this fear exists is difficult to state. The salesman certainly does not fear personal injury from the prospect, probably he does not fear even a rebuff. The only cause he has for fear is

that he may not get the order. It is in reality a kind of stage fright. If referred to its origin, it would probably be found to lie in the anxiety lest some one discover that he has entered upon a course in which he may prove a failure. In some cases this is increased purposely by the prospect through keeping the salesman waiting an unnecessary length of time in the outer office or where employees are coming and going. The reason for doing this seems to be so to "break the nerve" of the salesman that the prospect may be able either to buy the article at a lower price or to get rid of the salesman without hearing his canvass.

Under such conditions it should be the salesman's object to overcome his fear by dwelling on the proposition he has to offer instead of worrying over the coming interview. He should think of the quality of his goods. He knows that his goods are worth what he is asking for them, and the reasonableness of the price is another source of confidence and another reason for refusing to fear. He should remember that his house is a reliable one, that he has no apologies to make for that. He should call to mind the fact that his goods have been sold to hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of other customers who have been entirely satisfied with what they have bought.

Further than this, he should recall the points of his canvass, laying special emphasis upon what seems to fit this particular case, and stirring up his own

enthusiasm with the knowledge that if he were this prospect, he would want to buy or accept this proposition. By some such method as this the salesman will find that the effort to break his nerve has not only failed but has actually given him the opportunity of doing better work and making a more effective canvass than he might have done if he had not been kept waiting.

**The Approach.** Whether the salesman should use a *card* in introducing himself to the prospect is a matter of dispute. Sometimes a card sent in ahead of the salesman gives the prospect an opportunity of thinking over the matter long enough to refuse to see the salesman, or to prepare himself against the canvass when it is presented. One thing at least is true: the salesman should not hand a card to the prospect when he comes into his presence. This calls the prospect's attention away from the salesman himself. Some prospects demand a card by an office rule with which the office boy must comply, so it is well to have cards ready.

There is also a lack of unanimity as to what should be printed on the card. Some houses furnish their salesmen with cards bearing the name of the firm in large type with a line near the lower margin where the salesman may write his name. Others believe better work can be done when the salesman's card shows nothing but his name, without indicating his line of business. Probably different circumstances

will call for different methods of treatment. Perhaps one of the most effective uses to which the business card can be put is illustrated in the following incident.

A salesman of fertilizers had been refused an interview by a dealer time after time. On one occasion he found himself again waiting for the usual refusal which did not disappoint him. Taking one of his cards he wrote on the back, "Germany has just issued a decree forbidding any further exportation of potash until after the close of the war." The speed of the office boy's return with a summons for the salesman to present himself in the private office of the dealer indicated the importance attached to the brief message.

At this point the salesman must have all his wits at his command. The first impression made on the prospect often determines the result of the interview.

A salesman sent his card to a prospect whom he could see through a ground-glass partition. The prospect tore the card in two and threw the pieces into the waste basket. This would have made many men angry, perhaps justly so, but this particular salesman was wise. When the boy returned, saying the prospect was too busy to see the salesman, the latter requested the return of his card. The boy attempted to comply, but when he returned to the outer office he brought, instead of the card, a nickel. Immediately the salesman handed him another card, asking that he deliver it to his employer, with this statement: "Tell him my cards are two for a nickel." The boy came back almost instantly with the request that the salesman come in. This is but an illustration of the thousand ways in which the salesman must exercise his ingenuity to secure an entrance.

A dealer in a certain town bought his line of paints from a well-known paint company but would give them no order for

varnishes. A salesman called to see him a number of times but could make no headway with him. On one occasion the sales manager was in the town and the salesman asked him to see the dealer. The manager entered the store and found a solemn, unapproachable man of funereal demeanor standing behind the counter. "I should like to see Mr. S——," said he. "I am Mr. S——," came the answer.

"I am the sales manager of the — Paint Company," was the reply. "I understand you handle our paints but that you do not buy any of our varnishes." "That is correct," replied the merchant. "Well, I am here," said the manager, "to see whether we cannot find a way in which to hitch up the whole team." "No, I am entirely satisfied," was the discouraging rejoinder. "Well, Mr. S——, do you know what I think?" asked the manager. "Naturally I do not," was the answer. "I think that if I were in your shoes, and the sales manager of the — Paint Company came into my store, I would say to myself, 'This man could not be a sales manager in that company unless he knew a lot about paints and varnishes.' I would ask him into my private office, tell him to take a chair, and pump out of him all the information I could get."

A trace of a smile passed over the dealer's face as he said, "Won't you come into the office and sit down?" "Yes, thank you, I will," came the reply. The sales manager took away with him an order for two hundred and fifty dollars' worth of varnishes.

The salesman should remember that persistence and patience will be rewarded in the end. One business man had a private door through which he could make his exit to an alley, so that when he was ready to leave his office no one could see him go. A wise salesman learned of this, after having spent hours in the office waiting for the prospect who had gone. On his next

visit he hired a taxicab, stationed it in the alley, and waited beside it. When his prospect emerged, the salesman said, "Allow me to take you wherever you are going, Mr. Blank." The prospect recognized the salesman and said, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" but he entered the taxicab, and the salesman made his canvass.

**Greeting the Prospect.** When approaching the prospect the salesman should greet him courteously and pleasantly as though he had come to do a favor which the prospect needs very much and which the salesman is delighted to give. No attempt at circumlocution should be made. The salesman should give his name and state the business he represents, definitely and clearly. He should be careful at this point. He should not mumble nor slur the pronunciation. His name is very familiar to himself, but it is new to the prospect. The statement should be made in such a way as to win, not lose, the attention. He should never ask whether the prospect is busy. He would be a very poor business man if he were not, and would not acknowledge it if it were true. Of course he is busy. Neither should he be asked whether he has time for an interview. That is a confession that his time is more valuable than that of the questioner. But the salesman who has good sense will see that sometimes the prospect is too busy to give him the proper attention. In such a case he should not try to

break into the prospect's affairs but should watch for an opportunity to ask some such question as, "Mr. Blank, I see that you are extremely busy. Will you kindly tell me when you can grant me — minutes for presenting a proposition which will be to your interest?" The probabilities are that the salesman will, in this way, secure his opportunity, either immediately, since he does not ask for much time, or at an early future date.

There are some prospects whom it is difficult to approach; occasionally a man prides himself on his unapproachability. A wholesale millinery salesman entered the establishment of a retailer of such reputation. "Good morning, Mr. A——," said the salesman, "I represent the So-and-So Co., and have some goods which I think ought to interest you." "Well, I don't want any of your stuff," and the retailer turned and started away. "Just a moment, Mr. A——," urged the salesman. "This is a matter of importance to you, and I should like the opportunity of showing you the goods." "I told you I didn't want any," retorted the retailer. "When I say 'no' I mean it. Now, do you understand that?" "I beg your pardon, Mr. A——," again urged the salesman, "you must excuse what you will doubtless call my persistence, but if I took every one who says 'no' to me at his word the first time, I would sell very little. No, I do not understand." "All right, young man," yielded the merchant, "come in here, and let me see your goods." This was the opening of a canvass which brought a large order.

A salesman entered the retail store of a man who prided himself on being a "terror to salesmen." The retailer was sitting at a desk near one side of the room where he was pointed out to the salesman by two clerks who grinned as he proceeded to the place indicated. Stopping beside the desk, the salesman waited for the

man to stop writing and look up. He waited ten minutes, fifteen, twenty, thirty, and then said, "Good morning, Mr. X." No response was forthcoming, and he waited fifteen minutes longer. He became nervous, then angry.

"Can you spare a few minutes of your highly valuable time," inquired the salesman, "to look at a line of shoes in which I know you are interested?" This brought no more sign of life than the former. At the end of an hour the retailer looked up with a profane "Who in —— are you, and what do you want here?" "I'm not anybody in the place you name," retorted the salesman, "and I do not want anything except to tell you that you are the most discourteous and insulting man it has been my misfortune to meet. I represent the house from which you bought the shoes which I see on your shelves, but if you want any more of them, you may go to M—— and buy them."

Thereupon the salesman left the store, returned to the hotel, and went to dinner. As the waiter brought his order, the dining room door was opened and the shoe dealer entered, making straight for the table at which the salesman sat. "Are you still angry?" he asked. "Yes, I am," was the answer, "and I do not care to have anything to do with a man of your peculiar methods. Is there no other table at which you could sit?" "O, come now, forget it," replied the merchant. "You must not let a little personal peculiarity get on your nerves."

After dinner, the salesman allowed himself to be persuaded to return to the store where the retailer gave him an order for \$3500 worth of shoes, then induced the salesman to go home with him for supper, and kept him for the night.

The *first impression* made by the salesman is regarded by many as worth two thirds or more of the interview. If that first impression is bad, it places a great handicap upon his canvass. If it is good, it gives him a start in the right direction.



The salesman's *attitude* must be *dominant*, but *not arrogant*. A large part of the difference between dominance and arrogance is the difference between knowledge and pretense. One who knows can state things in a positive, dominant way. One who doesn't know tries to cover his ignorance with bluster and a bold front. Dominance is a desirable method of approach. To state a thing in such a way as to make the prospect feel that he ought to do that is a step towards having it done. This involves a principle long recognized by psychologists, that the need of the prospect must be made to stand out strongly. In certain cases the emphasis may be laid on his need and the meeting of that need, so that in his imagination he sees his future satisfaction. The salesman should keep on the prospect's side, look at the proposition from his viewpoint, and talk for him.

The salesman's attitude must be *fearless*, but *not familiar*. He has nothing for which to apologize. He is also a business man, and his time is just as valuable as the prospect's. He is not a beggar. He should come to the prospect with head up, looking him in the eye, and with an attitude which says, "You are busy and so am I, but this is business of importance to both of us right now." The salesman should be a gentleman, and should recognize that the prospect is one. He should not take liberties which a gentleman would not take. Taking hold of the prospect's coat, slapping

him on the back, grasping his arm, or anything of the sort, is out of place.

The salesman should be *self-respecting* but *not impudent*. There can be no excuse for introducing into the interview any form of impudence. This word is derived from a root meaning absence of modesty, and this is an unfortunate trait in a man or a woman.

He should be *courteous* but *not cringing*. Some people find it hard to distinguish between courtesy and weakness. The salesman is in the presence of the prospect to serve but not to slave. Courtesy is a mark of service ; cringing, of slavery.

His speech should be *clear-toned without shouting*. His enunciation should make every word and sentence clear-cut, but he should remember that his voice should not be raised above a natural tone, unless the prospect is partially deaf.

He should *not talk so fast* that his words run together. The manner in which the salesman makes his first statement will often determine the success of the interview. This should be done as though he had time enough to do it properly but none to waste. He is not in a great hurry but he must not dawdle. Either will make a bad impression. If the salesman is in too great a hurry, the prospect will feel that he is soon to be rid of him anyhow, so it doesn't matter whether he listens or not. If the salesman is too slow.

the prospect will become impatient, or will think of other things which could be done in the time that is wasted.

At this point it needs to be repeated that the salesman must make his presentation from the standpoint of the prospect's interest. This can hardly be repeated too often. The salesman will do well to arrange his talk so as to omit the personal pronoun of the first person as far as possible. The buyer cares nothing whatever about the salesman. The word "you" in the mouth of the salesman sounds very much better to the prospect than the word "I."

**The "Ah" Disease.** Some salesmen, like some public speakers, are afflicted with the "ah" disease. It is a kind of hesitation waltz expressed vocally. If the prospect begins to notice that after each word or phrase of the salesman's talk this long-drawn "ah" is used as a bridge to carry him over to the next idea, the probabilities are that from that point onward he will not notice anything else.

**Avoid the Negative Suggestion.** Of course the salesman must avoid the use of the negative suggestion. The clerk in a store wraps up what has been asked for and then says, "Anything else?" This is not exactly negative, but it might as well be if it produces the same result. The answer is almost invariably "no." A canvasser comes to the door and says, "You wouldn't want to buy any brooms, would you, lady?" Of

course the "lady," in order not to disappoint him, says, "No." He told her she didn't.

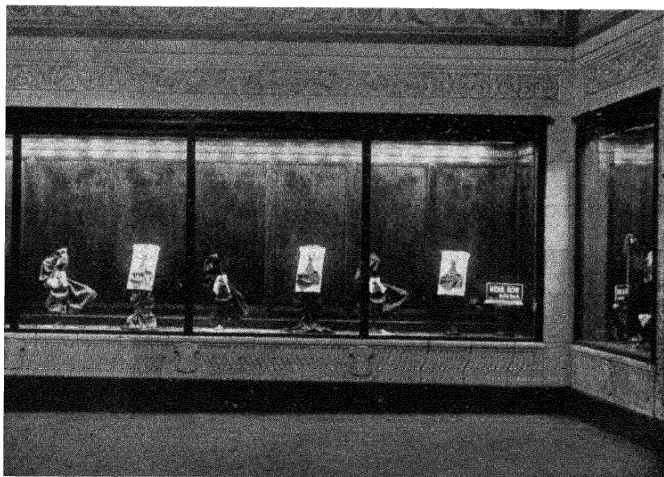
In contrast to this the salesman in a department store who had just sold silk for a dress, made the remark that the trimming department had just received some beautiful new novelties which would harmonize with this material. He opened the way in this manner for an additional sale which would have been lost if he had said, "There's nothing else you would like, is there?"

**The Prospect's Own Interest Stands First.** The prospect must be shown that the proposition is to his advantage, and in order that this may be clearly presented, it had better be done in short, crisp sentences, and will be all the more effective if the idea is repeated often. The salesman must think of the prospect's interest all the time. It is one of the laws of philosophy that the thing which holds highest place in the human mind is the individual's own personal interest. That which appeals to this interest will stand ahead of everything else. However patriotic one is, however much of a religionist or scientist, his personal interest is the channel through which the salesman should endeavor to make his appeal if that is at all possible.

The salesman should not try to be witty or funny. The clown belongs properly in the circus parade or the vaudeville theater. If one's talents lie in that

direction, he should seek his outlet through the theatrical booking agency. He is wasting his time in the commercial field.

**Best Kind of Illustration.** The best kind of illustration to reach the prospect and to hold his attention



SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW TO DRESS A WINDOW FORM BETTER ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL THAN FUNNY STORIES.

is a description of methods which will help him to sell or to make the best use of the article he is buying. Suggestions to the retailer as to methods of dressing his window, or to a woman buying materials for a dress as to the style of pattern, or the combination of trimmings, will be found far more acceptable and will leave a much better impression than any funny story or suggestive witticism of the salesman.

The salesman should also remember that noise is not a good substitute for reason. The more quietly he proceeds, and the more carefully he modulates his voice, the surer he will be of making a favorable impression. In some cases a course of lessons in vocalization would add much to the salesman's efficiency.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DEMONSTRATION

THE salesman must keep in mind the object of his canvass, and the steps in the process of the sale. These have been mentioned in a previous chapter. By the time he has reached the *demonstration* the prospect should have passed through the preliminary steps and should have reached at least the point of interest. If he has not, the salesman is wasting his time. The prospect should be allowed to ask questions or to make objections, if he shows a desire to do so. If the salesman rattles along at such a rate as to make it impossible for the prospect to "get a word in edgewise," the latter will simply be bottling up a lot of effervescence which will cause more trouble the longer it is confined.

The sales manager of a large factory says, "Get the prospect to talk; watch what he says, for in it he will show you the line of least resistance; then make your attack along that line."

Let him ask questions or make his objections, and then, if it is in any way possible, make the answer a form in which this same question or objection becomes

an argument for your goods. For example, a prospect for insurance says, "It takes all I can earn to keep up my expenses, therefore I cannot afford to take insurance." To this the salesman could answer, "Exactly so, and since you find that to be the case, what would be the condition in your home if it were suddenly deprived of your earnings?"

**The Salesman Should Not Plead nor Beg.** The salesman should never resort to coaxing nor begging the prospect for an order. He will find the statement thrown at him, "I can't do anything for you to-day," and he should not hesitate to reply to this in some such form as "I am not here to ask you to do something for me. I have an opportunity for you, a chance for you to make more money, or a method by which you can save expenses, and it is one which you cannot afford to miss." The salesman who pleads with the prospect to give him an order, or to please buy something, has thrown away his weapons and lain down in his canvass.

**Keep Control of the Interview.** It is necessary to say the same thing over many times. The manner of saying it should be varied so that one does not use the same words, but the idea should recur until it has made its impression on the prospect's mind. It has been stated that the prospect should be allowed to ask questions or make objections. This should not become an opportunity for the prospect to lead



the conversation off at a tangent from the canvass toward some other subject. The interview must be kept in hand by the salesman. If he finds the prospect determined to talk on some subject foreign to his canvass, he should stop talking. When the prospect comes to a stopping place, he may assent as far as he can to what has been said, and then lead the conversation back, courteously but firmly, to his canvass.

**Prospect Must Be Kept Interested.** The prospect must be kept interested in what is being said. If his interest has been lost, and he is thinking of other things, he must be brought back by some means, however unusual they may be. The prospect who is ready all the time with a nod or a grunt of assent while he has a far-away look in his eye needs careful watching. The probabilities are that he does not hear anything that is being said. There are several ways in which the attention may be secured after it has been lost. The salesman may ask for it if he sees that the customer is absent-minded. He may stop abruptly in his demonstration, making neither move nor sound until the buyer awakes from his day-dream. He may say or do something which is sufficiently absurd to shock the prospect into active attention.

An insurance agent was talking to a prospect as they walked along the street, but was sure the prospect scarcely heard what he was saying. The prospect's mind was wandering in other

channels. As they reached a busy corner the agent stepped up to a tall policeman and, in the hearing of his companion, said, "Pardon me, sir, can you tell me the price of onions?" "The price of what?" asked the policeman. "Of onions," answered the agent. "Sure I niver use thim at all; why, why what," stammered the astonished blue-coat. "No, I don't know annything about it." "Thank you," replied the agent, and the two walked on.

After turning the corner, the agent's companion began to chuckle, and then to laugh aloud. "The price of onions!" said he. "Say, you had him going," but the agent now had the undivided attention of his companion, and proceeded to sell him a policy. It is the unusual which attracts. In the noisy street amid the distractions of congestion a fainting woman attracts far more attention than the passage of a noisy vehicle.

In the demonstration the points of the goods should be presented in such a manner as to secure assent from the customer as far as possible. Questions or suggestions to which he is likely to answer "no" should be avoided. If he does use that disagreeable little word, perhaps the salesman need not notice it or can pretend he did not hear it.

**The Salesman Should Not Talk Too Much.** It is easily possible for the salesman to talk too much or too long. The *Youth's Companion* has a story of a Scotchman who was very economical in the matter of language. He had bought much of his goods from one house.. A young salesman, representing another house, learned of this peculiarity and determined to make use of it. He entered the retailer's establishment, waited patiently until the Scotchman came, and

said, "Buy?" "No, sell," was the reply, after which ensued the following colloquy: "What line?" "Builders' tools and hardware." "Stock full." "Good line, quick shipments, liberal terms." "Wait," said the Scotchman as he disappeared behind his desk. Five minutes later he emerged, handing the salesman a sealed envelope. After the young man had left the store and turned the next corner, he opened the envelope to see what he had. It was nearly the first order he had taken and was so large that it literally took his breath. He had secured a permanent customer.

To show how the salesman may injure his sale by talking too much, a hardware salesman tells of an instance in which a sale of five carloads of steel had been completed and the order signed. Later in the day the salesman decided to return to the buyer to talk over a change in the specifications of the steel to be delivered. By this time the buyer had had time to think that perhaps he had been a little hasty in giving the order, as nearly every buyer does. The reappearance of the salesman was his opportunity, and the order was canceled.

Some of the salesman's time can be spent much more profitably in showing his goods than in talking. He must not feel that he must talk, talk, talk, continuously and everlastingly, especially in a monotone. It may have the effect, frequently produced by the public speaker, of putting his hearer to sleep. Even if it does not reach that point, a monotonous drone will deaden the sensibilities of the hearer. If he will stop, handle his goods, showing what they will do,

it will give his prospect time to digest some of the things he has said.

**Placing the Article in the Hands of the Prospect.**

The salesman will make another step in the right direction if he provides something which the prospect can do with the article to be sold. If it is a machine, he should have the prospect operate it to some extent. Nothing will sell an automobile more quickly than to have the prospect sit at the steering wheel and operate it himself. If the article is an overcoat or a hat, have the prospect put it on. The sense of ownership will begin to assert itself, and the sale is well on the way.

A comptometer salesman had made two or three visits to a prospect. He had passed through the stages of attention and was in that of interest, but he did not seem to be making much headway. On the third visit the office manager accompanied the salesman. After going over about the same ground as had been previously covered, the manager induced the prospect to take the machine and perform several computations in addition and multiplication. Almost immediately the prospect reached the stage of desire, and after that the formal process of the sale was speedily completed.

In some kinds of goods what is above suggested is impracticable. When that is the case, the salesman can frequently make his appeal to the prospect's imagination. If the article should be a fine desk, the possibilities of this particular desk as it stands in a library with the accompanying surroundings and utility can be enlarged upon because, even though the

prospect has no library and had a different notion of what he was going to do with the desk, he will see it in a future day when he hopes to have those surroundings and conveniences.

**Holding Interest through Curiosity.** The prospect's interest can be held through the canvass many times by exciting his curiosity in its early stages. Some suggestion or some action referring to possibilities later on, or to an explanation which will be made by and by, can be used to hold his interest in places where he might otherwise lose it.

An agent for a western insurance company secured two very large ears of corn from the home state of the company. These he placed in the pockets of his overcoat. He entered the office of a man who, he suspected, might be a somewhat difficult prospect, and, drawing out the two ears of corn, laid them on the desk before beginning his canvass. The prospect looked at the corn, but the agent proceeded to demonstrate his policy, passing from one point to another. All the way through the prospect kept turning to glance at the corn from time to time. When the agent finally finished his canvass, and had secured the signature of the man at the desk, the latter's curiosity could be restrained no longer. "Well," said he, "but what has that to do with the corn?" "Nothing whatever," was the reply. "I merely brought that along to show you that the state I represent produces two good things, corn and insurance." Of course this must be done in such a way as to avoid keeping the prospect's interest away from the main canvass.

**An Absurd Suggestion.** If the prospect makes a suggestion during the canvass, the salesman should

not contradict him flatly. Suppose the prospect should say, "This article would be very useful in such and such a way," and suppose that this suggestion is a mere absurdity. The salesman should not say, "Mr. A——, that would be absurd," but something like, "Well, I will tell you, Mr. A——, that has not been tried. I don't know just how successful it might be, but perhaps after you have become thoroughly familiar with this article in other ways, you might consider that further." When the prospect has become thoroughly familiar with the article, he will see the absurdity of his own suggestion.

**Using the Words "Buy" and "Sell."** In making the demonstration it is much more important that a certain number of points be made very clear than that there be an innumerable host of suggestions, all of them more or less hazy. During the entire process of the sale the words "buy" and "sell," so far as the current transaction is concerned, should be kept in the background. Any suggestion which reminds the prospect that he is parting with money should be kept out of the canvass. The thought of his pocket-book should be carefully avoided during the conversation until he regards paying for the article a minor consideration.

**Clearness of the Demonstration.** In demonstrating, the article should be handled as if the salesman were showing it to his best friend. It should be

explained as fully as it would be to a child. It should be made as clear as if the person to whom it is shown knew nothing whatever about it.

**The Proposition Must Be Made Familiar.** One usually buys an article of which he knows much. It is for this reason that one prefers to buy the article he has had before rather than a similar one of a different kind. A man who owns a certain kind of automobile, typewriter, or fountain pen tells everybody to buy that kind, and when he buys a new one is more likely to buy the same kind than to change to another. This is because he knows that kind thoroughly. When the salesman comes with a new proposition, he must make it a thoroughly familiar thing so that the prospect feels that he knows it. No one will supply the prospect with this knowledge except the salesman. He must not expect any one else to give the prospect information, nor that the prospect will spend any time investigating his proposition until the stage of interest or desire has been reached.

A gentleman was standing on a street corner debating whether or not he should call on another business man concerning a commercial proposition, when a tramp approached him and asked for a match. He was somewhat interested in the tramp's appearance, and engaged him in conversation, more as a student of sociology than for any other reason. Among other questions he asked the tramp whether he was raised in town or in the country.

"I was raised on a farm," was the reply, "and like many other young fools, I thought I could pick up a fortune by going to the

city. Every fall about this time I begin to think of the orchards, of the vegetables we used to bring in and store in the cellar, the bins full of potatoes and apples. If I were not such a wreck, I sometimes think I would go back to the farm." "Are your parents living?" he was asked.

"Yes," he replied, "and I know just what they are doing, but they don't know anything about me. They all get together for Thanksgiving, and there will be the finest roast turkey with cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes that melt in one's mouth, brown gravy, and baked sweet potatoes. There will be all those jellies that mother knows so well how to make, fresh butter, hot baking-powder biscuits, two or three kinds of home-made pickles, crisp celery right out of the trenches, steaming hot plum pudding, and a big slice each of mince pie and pumpkin pie."

"Say, old chap," said the business man, "come along with me. If you are as hungry as I am, we'll find a place where we can get something to eat, though it may not be equal to the dinner you have been describing."

The tramp mentioned above would have made a good salesman. He had all the skill necessary to work on the mind of the buyer and produce the results he desired. If he had asked the man to give him money, or had merely told him he was hungry, the possibilities are that he would have received little or nothing, but a description of the Thanksgiving dinner had operated on his prospect's mind more completely than anything else he could have said.

**Power of Suggestion.** The mind is dominated by ideas, and the idea which is uppermost in the mind tends to express itself in action. When the idea apparently originates within, it is called an impulse;



when it comes from outside, it is called a suggestion. The extent to which the impulse or suggestion holds sway for the time being determines the resulting action. Opposing or modifying ideas hinder or prevent action. People in general are highly susceptible to suggestion. The salesman can make use of this because he is able to make suggestions. Mention has been made of the desirability of asking questions in a positive way. In the same way suggestions should be positive, not negative.

If he is selling clothing or any article of wearing apparel, the salesman should not stand off and say, "That doesn't look bad." The prospect doesn't want what merely doesn't look bad. He begins to imagine that if that is the best the salesman can say of it, other people will not hesitate to leave out the negative. The suggestion should be positive. In case the salesman is selling a machine he should not say, "We have had very little trouble with that article." The buyer is not looking for trouble, and is much more likely to buy something which the salesman can pronounce entirely satisfactory.

There is always the possibility of stimulating the buyer's mind, and the more he can be reached by means of suggestion the deeper will be the impression and the more likely the desired action. If one thinks of laughter, or sees a person laughing heartily, he will suddenly discover that he is smiling

in spite of the fact that he has no idea what is the cause of the merriment. If one is sitting where he can see the faces of several people, and some one of the company yawns, the effect is soon visible on nearly every one else. The wag takes advantage of the same mental law when he stops on the street corner where many people are passing, shades his eyes with his hand, and gazes steadily upward. In a few minutes there is likely to be need of a policeman to disperse the crowd which is literally gazing at nothing. So in many cases the suggested needs to be supplied by the article being sold will result in a favorable decision.

If these suggestions can be made in such a way that they seem to originate in the prospect's own mind, they will be stronger than if made directly by the salesman. As an illustration of the impossibility for the mind to resist the power of suggestion, there is a story told of an alchemist who agreed to furnish a recipe by which any one could turn eggs into gold. The instructions were to break a dozen eggs into a pan and stir them for half an hour, without once thinking of the word "hippopotamus." At the end of the half hour the pan would be full of gold. No one has yet succeeded in carrying out the recipe.

**"Short Circuit" and "Long Circuit" Appeal.**  
In some department stores salesmen formerly asked customers at the close of a sale, "Do you wish it

delivered? ” The proprietors of these stores decided that their delivery service was being taxed more than was necessary. All salesmen were notified that the question asked of the buyer should be worded thus: “ Will you take it with you? ” A careful estimate was made of the difference in the expense of delivery during the next month. It was found to decrease about one third merely as the result of this different form of suggestion. Some articles can be sold by the appeal to the appetite, comfort, or direct convenience of the prospect. This method is sometimes called the “ short circuit ” appeal, while that involving the processes of reasoning and weighing the arguments for and against before a decision is reached is designated the “ long circuit ” appeal. As a rule the salesman will find it better to make his opening charge along the former lines, bringing up the heavier artillery of the “ long circuit ” later in his canvass, if the article he is selling admits of such an arrangement.

**Difference in Buying Resulting from Difference in Sex.** A salesman should study the differences between the sexes in the matter of buying; whether women or men, alone or together, are more likely to buy his particular goods, and make his canvass accordingly. Some attempts have been made to classify the kinds of goods bought by each sex or by the two in association, but so little has been done that conclusions have not been reached. A few differences may well be kept in

mind. Women are usually more patriotic than men, hence local or home industries appeal to the former more than to the latter. Women are less willing to accept recommendations on goods than are men. Women's dislikes are stronger than men's, while men are more likely to persist in the use and purchase of a thing once adopted. Women are more likely to buy or to form their decisions by a sort of intuitive process sometimes called "jumping at conclusions." Men reach their results by a more roundabout way of reasoning, but there is no conclusive evidence that either of these is far superior to the other in the net results.

**Showing Too Many Things at Once.** Care must be exercised by the salesman not to overwhelm the buyer with too many things at one time. The large number has become familiar to the salesman, but each of them is new to the buyer. He must be given a chance to make a selection, but not out of such a quantity as to confuse him.

"When I was comparatively new in the business," said a salesman of a wholesale millinery house, "an accident one day opened my eyes to one of the fundamentals of salesmanship. A customer came in and I started to show her the sample hats. She became enthusiastic almost immediately. 'My, isn't that lovely!' she exclaimed. At once I brought forward another which elicited another exclamation, 'That is just splendid!' I became very much elated, and brought out a half dozen of the latest models. Her exclamations were like wine to my enthusiasm. I kept bringing more and more as fast as I could carry them to her, until presently she cried out, 'Stop!' I was very much surprised, and

suppose I looked it. 'You must give me time to think,' said the customer. 'I shall soon be unable to tell what I want or whether I want anything.' Just there I began to see the value of showing and selling one thing at a time."

**Securing a Good Prospect's Influence.** If the matter of the sale is of very great importance, such, for example, as the influence of this particular prospect on others in his vicinity, it may be worth the salesman's while to go even so far as to purchase some article from the buyer in order to secure his attention and good will.

An insurance salesman entered a new town for the purpose of establishing his company. He was in this instance what is called a missionary salesman. After studying the situation, he decided that a certain jeweler would be an influential prospect, and so proceeded to canvass him. The jeweler was carrying a policy in a fraternal order and did not seem to be much interested. After some conversation the salesman took his leave, but just before going he handed the jeweler a pamphlet which he asked him to read. On the following morning the salesman returned while the jeweler was winding the watches and clocks. After a few remarks of a non-committal character, the salesman noticed a glass punch bowl in a case across the room. Walking over to it he remarked, "There is something I believe my wife would like. That is a very handsome piece of work."

The jeweler replied, "Yes, that is a fine piece. We had three before the holidays and that is the only one I have left." The salesman continued to examine and to comment on the bowl, finally asking, "What is the price of that bowl, Mr. R. —?" "They were priced at forty-five dollars," answered the jeweler, "but if you wish to buy that one you may have it for thirty-five." The insurance man replied, "You have made a sale if you can wrap it

up in such a way as will enable me to carry it home with me on the train." Of course the piece could be safely wrapped.

This process required some time, and when it was completed and the price of the bowl was in the jeweler's cash drawer, a very friendly relationship had been established. "By the way, Mr. R——," asked the insurance solicitor, "did you find time to look over the pamphlet last evening?" "Why, yes, I read part of it," was the reply. "Did you notice the comparison of rates and the results?" was the next question. As the jeweler drew the pamphlet from his pocket the salesman deposited the punch bowl on a chair, and the canvass was on. The result was a policy to the jeweler and four other policies to as many of his friends to whom he recommended the insurance agent.

**Suggesting Additional Purchases.** Probably one of the most neglected accomplishments in a salesman is a skillful suggestion of additional purchases. Here again comes the danger of negative suggestion. "There was nothing else, was there?" or "Is that all?" or "Anything else?" all make it easy for the prospect to say "no." In fact they really invite that answer, and he generally gives it. An additional sale may be an easy matter when it is in direct connection with what the buyer has already purchased, like lining for a dress or trimming for a hat, but the tactful salesman will see farther than this and will have suggestions of other things which must be gauged by the character of his customer, the kind of thing he thinks would appeal, and the amount of money he judges this customer can afford to spend.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CLOSING THE SALE

**Nervousness in Approaching the Close.** As the salesman approaches the close of the sale he should be on the alert, but he should not allow himself to become nervous. One of the difficulties which loses perhaps more orders than any other one is a kind of panic which seizes the salesman when he comes to the critical point of asking the prospect for his signature. It is a form of stage fright or what is called by hunters, "buck fever." The salesman can often avoid this embarrassing feeling by passing directly from the oral suggestions he has been making to the writing of the order, and passing the pen to the buyer for his signature without allowing any break to intervene.

**Form of Question to Avoid a Negative Answer.** Another method of forestalling the too easy "no" of the buyer is to make the request for the order an alternative. Instead of asking whether he doesn't want this article, the question can be put as to which kind of article he prefers. If it is a book, for example, he may be asked whether he prefers the cloth or the leather binding. To this he cannot say "no." If,

on the other hand, it is something which cannot be placed in the alternative form, the question may be worded in such a way as to make it very hard for him to refuse. The accident insurance salesman, for instance, can put his closing question in some such form as, "Are you willing, Mr. B——, to make your family take a risk which you might think of somewhat less importance, and run the chance of what might come to them in case you were unable to provide for them?" Here the answer the salesman wishes is "no," and he has made it very hard for the prospect to say anything else.

**When the Prospect Hesitates.** If the close of the sale is reached and the prospect hesitates, and seems unwilling to make a contract or to accept the goods, the probabilities are that there has been a weak spot somewhere in the salesman's argument. The customer's mind is dwelling on that particular spot. If the salesman wishes to make his work complete, he will find out by careful questions just where the prospect is hesitating, and cover that point to his complete satisfaction.

**Interruptions during the Canvass.** Interruptions may be necessary or unnecessary. It will often occur that while the salesman is talking his prospect will be called away to answer the telephone, to give some information to a clerk, or to answer a question. Sometimes a new buyer or purchasing agent wishes to



impress upon the salesman the extreme importance of his new position, and in the midst of a demonstration he will call the office boy and give him some instructions which might just as well have been left until



AFTER AN INTERRUPTION THE PROSPECT'S THOUGHTS MUST BE BROUGHT  
BACK TO THE CANVASS.

later, or will call in the stenographer and dictate a letter, or perhaps call up the district messenger service to send a telegram. The salesman must grit his teeth and summon his complete stock of patience. The prospect will learn better some day. Meanwhile

the salesman must seek to secure the prospect's complete attention after each interruption.

One method of recalling this attention is to make some startling statement upon the return of the prospect, so that he will forget everything else. Another method, if the salesman is sure the interruptions are unnecessary, is to speak in a low tone, so that the prospect must give careful attention to hear what he is saying. Still another way is to ask the prospect some questions concerning statements made previous to the interruption. These questions must not sound like cross examination. The prospect must not be made to feel that he is being catechized.

The salesman must keep in mind the motive by which he thinks he can reach the prospect and return to that motive in different ways as he goes along. After each of the interruptions he must repeat some of the things he stated before.

**Answering Objections.** Every opportunity should be given to the prospect to ask questions and make objections if he is inclined to do so. It is frequently desirable to assist in bringing out these questions and objections. Sometimes the very best arguments the salesman can make are based on objections by the prospect, especially if the salesman is thoroughly prepared. To ignore or try to dodge them is a confession of weakness which will not be overlooked by a prospective buyer. It is an opportunity for the

salesman to treat the question raised as if it were a point he would have reached very soon in his talk even if the buyer had said nothing about it. The objection raised will frequently give the salesman an opportunity to carry the suggestion it contains to the point where the idea will answer itself by becoming an absurdity. Among the stock objections are :

1. *The article is cheaper elsewhere.* This may or may not be true. The salesman may not know whether the statement is truth or falsehood. If he knows it is untrue, it is not a wise plan to say so in a blunt, positive way. Neither is it wise to offer to bet that it cannot be done nor to offer an amount of money to charitable institutions if the prospect can make his word good. This comes too near an insinuation that the prospect is speaking falsely, and while he may know that what he says is false, he does not wish to be told so.

2. *Good points of a rival's goods.* An objection raised in this form is usually made for the purpose of starting the salesman on a discussion of a competitor. This is always dangerous ground. He should say as little about the competing article as possible, emphasizing the points of difference strongly, and demonstrating the superiority of his own goods in quality or in make.

3. *The article costs too much; cannot be afforded.* If the salesman can show that the article he is selling

will produce or save for the buyer more than it costs, the latter cannot afford to be without it. Two classes of buyers raise this objection. In one class are those of whom it is true or for whose purposes a cheaper article will serve as well. In the other class are those who desire to put the salesman off or whose experience has not been sufficient to enable them to know that the best is the cheapest in service and satisfaction. To those in the former class the salesman should make no further effort to sell. For those in the latter class he has a message. The price paid for an article is forgotten, but the service secured from it and the satisfaction enjoyed while using it are what count toward future trade and repeat orders.

4. *The article offered is not needed.* In meeting this objection it is worth while to raise such questions as: Is what the prospective buyer has the best kind? Does it do the work in the most economical way? Does it enable the owner to meet the competition of those who are better equipped? Does it make the best possible impression upon those with whom the owner comes in contact? Would continued use of the inferior article indicate a lack of progressiveness?

5. *The prospect has not time to discuss the proposal further.* This is a method often employed to get rid of the salesman in the hope that he will not return. A courteous request for a future time will usually find available time at the present. When the prospect

realizes that the salesman is not to be put off in that way, he will usually agree to hear immediately what he has to say.

6. *Time to think it over.* In some cases this is *bona fide*, but in others it is only a subterfuge. The salesman must judge between the two. If he decides that he is facing the latter, and his decision will probably lean in that direction as a rule, he should point out the disadvantages which are liable to arise by postponement, and the desirability of immediate action. If the goods are satisfactory and desirable, if their ownership promises to be profitable, each day of postponement means so much loss to the buyer.

**Special Closing Men.** In some houses there are special "closing men" who follow up the regular salesmen to do the closing. It has been found, however, that in cases where a different man accomplishes the close more satisfactorily than the preceding salesman, it is not so much the ability of the special closing man as it is the introduction of a new element. In many cases the position of the two men could be reversed and the sales closed as successfully by the one who preceded as by the regular closing man. Thus in some lines two men are able to accomplish more together than on separate territories. But the experience of different houses seems to indicate a marked lack of uniformity in opinion as to the usefulness of special closing men.

**The Psychological Moment for Closing.** It is probable that in every sale there is some point at which it would be best to make the close. It is not always possible for the salesman to know just when he has



THE CLOSE OF THE SALE — "SIGN HERE, PLEASE."

reached that point. It is much better for him to introduce the close a little too soon than too late. He can sometimes save time by trying to close at a comparatively early point in the canvass. If he finds that the prospect is not ready, he can go on, and bring up another closing point later. In any

event he should not worry about the exact closing moment, for in doing so he is likely to spoil the whole canvass.

There are likely to be several good closing places, and if he should happen to miss the best one, he can use one of the others. A little study of his prospect as he is going along will give him a clew as to when he has reached the psychological moment for closing. One of the subjects on which the salesman should put some careful study might appropriately be framed and hung over his desk under the caption, "When I Have Said Enough."

It is very important that the final summing up of the close should be done when *no one is about except the salesman and the prospect*. At that time he should have the prospect alone, if it is at all possible.

In a good many cases it will be necessary to give the prospect a *final push*. He is ready to buy, he wants to buy, he is making his decision, but he needs just a little impetus to carry him over the line.

When a circus came to a certain town a number of boys went to the grounds anxious to get in. Shortly before the opening of the performance a man came to the boys with small yellow checks. He gave one of them to each of ten boys with the following instructions: "When the ticket seller makes his 'spiel,' you kids get up around the outside of the crowd, and when he says 'Come on now, everybody, get your tickets,' you push in toward him and he will give you each a ticket to the big top for this yellow slip."

The boys followed instructions without having any knowledge of why this was done. The man who gave them the slips probably did not know the psychological principle, but he knew that it was the final push which started the crowd into the tent. The fact that the ticket seller kept saying while he was giving out the tickets, "Don't crowd, time enough and room for everybody," was exactly the suggestion which made every one anxious to get in first. A somewhat similar effect can sometimes be produced by skillful salesmen when the prospect is just paddling on the edge of an order instead of plunging in.

A paint company had been unable to reach an important dealer in a New York town, the salesman having tried repeatedly. At last he appealed to the district sales manager who went to the town and accompanied the salesman to the store of the dealer in question. He met them courteously, and the manager began his canvass. He talked nearly an hour, the dealer manifesting the keenest of interest, when suddenly, without a word of any kind, the latter picked up his hat and overcoat and walked out of the store.

The following day was Saturday, and the two returned to the same store, and had exactly the same experience. On Sunday the dealer, his wife, and the two salesmen took dinner together at a prominent hotel at the invitation of the dealer. After the dinner the local agent engaged the lady in conversation and the dealer broached the subject of the previous day to the sales manager. After half an hour or more the prospect turned away as abruptly as he had done on both previous days, and joined in the conversation with his wife.

The manager was sure he had diagnosed the case as one in which the prospect was running away, not from the salesman, but from himself. He had, therefore, a very definite reason for persistence. Monday found the two again in the store. The prospect began to argue, and the sales manager felt more at ease, for when the prospect talks, he invariably opens the way to his weakest defenses.



Before the matter could be concluded, however, the dealer again simply walked away and left the two men. At this the local salesman became angry, and was in favor of leaving for the last time.

But Tuesday morning found both men again on the firing line. The proposition was reviewed, and now the prospect took a new tack. He stopped the conversation by flatly refusing to consider an order, turned away, and entered his private office at one side of the store. "Come away," said the local salesman. "You cannot go any farther without useless humiliation."

"You wait right here until I call you," answered the manager. He walked to the gate which separated the dealer's private office from the aisle, opened it, entered, and addressed the dealer. "See here, Mr. L——, you were something of a coward just now. You know this proposition is the thing you ought to accept, and you are simply afraid to step out where you haven't been before. Now I am going to make one more concession. I will give another half of one per cent discount for cash on this first order if you will settle the matter right now, and do what you know is best for yourself."

"Here, Jim," called the dealer to a clerk. "Go back with this man, and make up an order for a car lot of paints." The order was for \$3500 worth of goods.

The matter of concessions to a buyer, based on quantity of goods bought at one time, shortness of shipping route, promptness of payments, or other unusual considerations, is to be carefully distinguished from price cutting which has been mentioned in a previous chapter.

A stockholder in a manufacturing company became dissatisfied, borrowed money on his stock, bought out another factory of the same kind, and undertook to secure a market. His success was not

great, and he gave the sweeping order to his salesmen to offer the trade a standing cut of five per cent on whatever price could be secured from any other company in the same line. A salesman for another company was met all over his territory with the statement by his customers, "I can beat your price five per cent." "I guess you can," agreed the salesman, "if you prefer to do so. I don't blame the man who is making the offer. He is trying to secure a market. I don't think he is doing it, but I don't blame him for trying. Did you buy from his man?" "No, I didn't," was the reply. A little later the cut was made ten per cent, and still later fifteen.

This salesman insisted that he couldn't see how a house could make such a cut and continue to do business, telling his trade that it is better to refuse to meet a cut, and continue in business, than to surrender and have to close up. He lost very little of his trade, and when the new venture failed within a few months, the estimate of this salesman in the minds of his customers rose considerably because he remained unshaken and cool and did not resort to abuse of the competitor.

### **A Concession after the Order Has Been Secured.**

The permanent good will of a customer can often be secured if the salesman has some small concession in reserve which he can make to the buyer after the order is closed. This corresponds closely to the "lagniappe" of the New Orleans market, and leaves a pleasant sensation in the mind of even the most unsentimental gorgon of a buyer.

**Reading the Order.** Up to the point of definite assurance of the order the salesman is on the aggressive side of the canvass while the prospect is on the defensive. At this point there is a change of attitude

on the part of both, and the positions become almost reversed. It now becomes necessary for the salesman to be careful that nothing appears in the order which he is unwilling to sign or which will not be carried out by his house. This becomes especially important if the buyer suddenly finds himself very much pressed for time.

A salesman for a hardware manufacturing company discussed the items and terms of an order for a car load of goods with a buyer who agreed with all the suggestions made and proceeded to write out the order. Just at this point he became very solicitous about the time and was apparently in a great hurry to reach some other business. The salesman was not to be caught, however, and took time to read the order carefully. He discovered that there had been a slight alteration made in writing the terms, and that an important matter had been omitted.

The salesman said, "There are two points here which will have to be changed a little." "What are they?" demanded the buyer. "The terms should be f. o. b. our city," replied the salesman, "instead of f. o. b. point of delivery at the stipulated price plus freight on car lot." "What's the difference?" asked the buyer. "Just this," answered the salesman. "If we made that rate now, you would insist on the same rate on later orders. Some of those orders would not be car lots and then the freight rate would be higher."

"Well, the C. H. Co. is the worst lot of hair splitters I have run across," complained the buyer, "but I suppose it will have to go in that way. Go ahead and change it."

## CHAPTER IX

### FINDING AND CORRECTING MISTAKES

THE salesman should never get the idea that his canvass is complete. He can never say nor think that he has nothing more to do but go over the same ground with each customer. A canvass is *never complete*. As times change, customers change, or there is a variation in the situations which arise, and the canvass must be altered a little here and there to meet the changed conditions. A new idea will be suggested sometimes, and should be incorporated at the proper place in the canvass. Some good selling point, used many times, will become obsolete, and must be discarded. A new illustration can be incorporated in place of an old one which is not so good. All of these things will help to keep the canvass interesting to the salesman as well as to add to its effectiveness with buyers. When the salesman has lost interest in his canvass, it is as dead as dry wood.

The salesman should keep a *record* of each day's work. For this purpose a pocket notebook is an excellent thing. He can make a chart on a page of the notebook, showing the number of customers met,

the number of canvasses made, and the number of orders taken. If his canvass is built along the lines previously suggested, this chart will show at what point it stops. If this is frequently at the same point, the probabilities are that there is a weakness at that point. It may be in the demonstration. If so, the demonstration should be revised. If he finds it is in the close, he should make an entirely new form of closing, and then try again. In this way he will eventually reach the very best canvass he can make.

Large amounts of money are spent in *advertising* the commodities for sale by a great store in the hope that the people who read the advertisements may be persuaded to come in and see the goods which are on sale. An officer of one of these stores puts the following hypothetical case: "Suppose that Mr. H——, president of the company, should take a position on a busy corner, and give a fifty-cent coin to each person who would promise to come to his store and look at the articles which are on sale, until he had passed out fifty dollars. If the salespeople in the store are indifferent and lack enthusiasm when these prospective customers appear, most of Mr. H——'s time and money has been thrown away. This amounts to practically the same thing as spending fifty dollars on an advertisement which brings a hundred people into the store, and one of the mistakes common among

salespeople is the failure to appreciate the need of teamwork in holding those who have been induced to come in and see the goods, not only to sell once but also to make permanent customers."

Manufacturing and wholesale houses employ expert advertisement writers to pave the way for their salesmen throughout the territory to be covered. A salesman who follows this advertising campaign under the impression that all he has to do is to harvest the orders is under a serious delusion. The advertisements have cleared the ground, but the salesman must plant the facts and cultivate them with confidence in order to secure the crop of business he ought to expect.

It is well known that the immediate results of an advertisement often fail to pay its cost. It is the permanent trade it secures which makes it worth while. If the salesman finds that a large part of the customers thus brought in contact with him fail to continue their patronage, he should hold a serious session of self-examination, for the probabilities are that these losses are due to some mistake on his part.

In starting the work of each day the salesman can fortify himself, arouse his energy, renew his enthusiasm, and increase his efficiency by going over his canvass to himself, *asking questions* and answering them. He will make this plan most effective if the questions are asked and answered aloud.

Are my goods all right?

Are my prices fair?

Are the goods honestly made?

Are they giving satisfaction?

Did I fail in courtesy yesterday?

Am I doing all I can to give the best service?

Have I allowed imperfect goods to go out?

Have I lost my patience or my temper?

Do the people whom I meet need the goods I sell?

Do they know they need them?

Why am I here?

Am I going to sell to every customer to-day?

Can I depend upon the house to stand back of my statements?

Did I make every sale I should have made yesterday?

Did I allow a customer to go away angry or dissatisfied?

This list of questions may be increased indefinitely. It may be called by any name which suits the salesman's fancy. The essential part of the matter is that he shall enter the new day's work with the same determination to succeed that fired him on his first day in the new venture or on the occasion when he felt that one of the executive officers of the house was watching his canvass.

The president of a department store appeared on one occasion before the store's private class in salesmanship, and in the course of his remarks asked,

"*Who is the boss* in this establishment?" "You are," was the unanimous reply. "That is a very common mistake of the sales force in every establishment," was his comment; "try again." After the guesses had exhausted the list of the company's officers, he answered his own question as follows: "No, none of the persons mentioned is the boss, but that personage is very real nevertheless. It is the boss who pays your salary and mine, who provides employment for all of us, who furnishes the profit for the stockholders, and for whom our best efforts should be put forth. The customer is the boss. Don't jump up and increase your efforts when you see me or any other officer of the company approaching your counter, but when you see the boss approach, then jump."



## CHAPTER X

### RELATIONS BETWEEN DEPARTMENT MANAGERS AND SALESMEN

**Coöperation among Employees.** It is a well-known fact that in playing a game more depends upon good *teamwork* than upon brilliant individual effort. This is equally true in the successful accomplishments of a great business house. The office force and the sales force must work with each other and for each other. The following suggestions are the result of long experience in actual business. They show what is going on in the executive department of a successful business and how that relates itself to the sales force, whether inside or outside.

**How Profits are Figured.** Within the last few years the practice of figuring profits on the selling price of goods has become almost universal. A rate is fixed as the normal profit for the business in question, and if it is found that any line is failing to show that rate, it is allowed to fall into the background, or it may be closed out entirely. In case of a class of goods for which only a few buyers call, it is usually more profitable to secure them on special orders

than to allow them to occupy room needed for more active stock. The quantity carried at any one time of any line of goods should be limited to the amount needed for a comparatively short period. Frequent changes make for activity and freshness of stock, and prevent the accumulation of goods which are out of date.

**Reciprocity.** When there is prospect of opening an account with a new manufacturing house, buyers are expected to give preferences where they are received in return. If the new factory buys any of the goods sold by the house, it is expected that every effort will be made to sell to it as well as buy from it. Some houses prefer to divide their patronage among two or more sources of supply rather than to confine it to one. This is done in order to have more opportunities for securing special bargains. In the effort to secure such bargains, however, buyers should be careful not to misrepresent conditions nor to undertake to play one salesman against another, for in so doing they will probably lose the confidence of the salesmen and defeat their own purposes. If one salesman's prices are too high, a better method of procedure is to give an order to another house or factory.

**Method of Cataloguing.** In buying from a new company there should be a clear understanding as to the method of cataloguing the new goods in the

buying house's catalogue. Some houses use inserts, especially if the catalogue is permanently bound. In this case the company from which the goods are bought may furnish the printed matter for the insert. The objection to this plan is that the printed matter furnished may be of as many different sizes and styles as there are different sources. Other houses require the manufacturing company to furnish only copy and electros, having all the printing done by their own printers so that it is uniform in size and in style. In this case the manufacturing company is usually required to pay the expense of the printing. Many houses use the loose-leaf form of catalogue in order to be able to keep it up to date without the necessity of reprinting the entire book at short intervals. Some manufacturing companies expect the return of the electros used in this manner. When that is the case, they should be billed to the owner on a no-charge bill with a copy of the page of the catalogue on which they were used.

**Changes in Catalogue Prices and Marks.** Prices and cost marks of individual items may have to be changed in the catalogue. When this is done, great care is necessary to preserve accuracy. Whatever is written in the catalogue should be entered plainly and distinctly. This is especially true of price marks and cost marks which are neither letters nor figures. No other writing of any kind should be done in the

catalogue. Articles catalogued by number should remain under the same number unless there is imperative need of change.

**Where Catalogues Should Be Found.** Complete catalogues, price lists, and discount sheets should be in the hands of the general purchasing agent, and may be consulted by others when necessary. Discount sheets are so valuable and important that they should be carefully guarded. For large numbers of catalogues a filing cabinet should be provided. Only those of value to the business should be preserved. For convenience, individual buyers should keep small private catalogues with blank pages for items ordered, special quotations, and the names of persons making such quotations.

**Copies of Orders.** Telephoned or telegraphed orders should be confirmed in writing as soon as possible, and copies of all orders should be kept on file by the one who gave them. If the goods are ordered especially for an individual buyer, the factory should be requested to place the name or initials of the buyer on the package for identification. In all cases the one giving the order should make sure that the salesman has the proper name or number so that the goods may be properly delivered and checked upon arrival. If it is necessary to have the goods delivered while the one who gave the order is absent from the house, he should have some one fully informed of the

circumstances so that they can be properly cared for in his absence.

**In Case of a Large Order.** Incoming orders should be acknowledged immediately. If the order is a large one or is from a new customer, a personal letter will add to the good will of the buyer and help to hold his future trade. Notice of such large orders may raise questions in the mind of the receiver. If he does not know the buyer, he should undertake to learn the answers to the following: Is he responsible? Is he slow pay? Does he make claims for shortage, damage, etc.? Are the goods he buys yielding only a small margin of profit? Does he discount his bills?

**Handling of Incoming Orders.** Incoming goods ordered in large quantities will require unusual space in the receiving department upon arrival. The head of that department should have advance information so that he can prepare for them. The shipper of such orders should be requested to enter on the bill of lading the number of boxes, packages, or crates so that the railroad companies will furnish the necessary help in unloading.

**Through Shipment of Goods.** The buyer who has ordered goods shipped directly is usually more or less anxious to have them in as short a time as possible. He should not be kept waiting. If goods are to reach him promptly, they must not be shipped so that a transfer from steam to electric carrying lines or the

reverse is required. Such transfers will usually not be made. These two kinds of carriers have not yet come to any satisfactory working agreement.

**Selling Goods in Packages.** All classes of goods are being sold more and more in packages. Salesmen should endeavor to avoid breaking packages. If larger or smaller packages are desirable, they can be made, the cost of the change being added to the price of the goods. If it is necessary to break packages, it will necessitate additional handling, which will add again to the price. This includes such items as time, containers, packing, and breakage.

**Packing Goods for Shipment.** Packages should be so prepared that the danger of breakage, leakage, and other losses will be reduced to the minimum. If boxes or cartons are not strong enough, they should be reënforced so as to make them carry through. If there is a claim department, all correspondence regarding claims should be kept on file in that department. Any assistance which salesmen can give to this department in order to facilitate the adjustment of such matters should be carefully and promptly given.

**Goods Sold under the House's Name.** Goods sold under the name of the house, especially if the house uses name brands, should not show the name or the address of the manufacturer, nor should these be given to the customer. If he desires supplies or parts, they should be furnished by the house. Most houses now

object to the expressions " For Sale By " and " Made For " on goods they sell.

**Treatment of Outside Salesmen.** It is as much to the interest of the house as to that of the calling salesman to give him all the attention necessary to insure a satisfactory examination of his goods and a knowledge of his prices. Any effort on the part of a manufacturing or selling house to influence a buyer or purchasing agent by such means as presents, prizes, bonuses, and entertainment, will usually result in the buying house throwing out the line entirely, or discharging the buyer, or both. All concessions should go to the house. If a buyer knows of any concessions which have been made to buyers or agents of other houses, he should refuse to buy until equivalent concessions have been made to his house.

**Mistakes in Invoices.** Invoices in which there are errors may be treated in one of two ways. They may be returned to the shipper for correction or held while the shipper is requested to send the corrected invoice. The latter is the better plan. Each incoming invoice is forwarded to the department manager who checks the goods as to quality, quantity, and price. At this point promptness is absolutely essential in order to make the way clear for the discounting of bills.

**Special Marks and Their Meaning.** Special marks are used for different purposes, such as to indicate that the goods are not regularly in stock but are in a

warehouse, hence requiring more time for delivery; to show that some items are unusually good sellers; to point out the fact that goods are not in stock at all. A mark for one of these purposes, once adopted, should not be changed unless circumstances arise which make a change absolutely necessary.

**Care and Disposal of Samples.** Samples are usually furnished salesmen on a bill on which the name of the manager of the department appears as salesman. These samples should be chosen for the purpose of making the best showing. In order that this may be so, the salesman should consult the sales manager as to what he should use. As samples begin to show signs of deterioration they should be returned or sold. Samples returned to stock are usually almost worthless, so it is better to sell them if possible. At the time of taking inventory, all sample accounts should be closed in one way or another, even if it is nothing more than closing the old account into a new one or into the salesman's personal account. At this time department managers are very busy, and salesmen should not forget that there is no time left for them.

**Care and Reports of Stock.** Stock should be kept clean, that which requires wrapping being kept in neat wrappers. All goods are listed on stock sheets which are kept in alphabetically arranged filing cabinets. "Deck stock," "floor stock," or "overstock" is that piled on the floor. In selling it is permissible to include



substitutes only on condition the buyer understands the substitution and prefers it to omission of the original item. Salesmen should be informed and should take careful note of what goods are in stock, what stocks are broken, and what ones are extra full.

**Keeping Salesmen Informed.** Meetings held by the house, by department managers, or by sales managers for the purpose of giving instruction on how to sell goods, how to meet objections, and what lines of stock to push, should be attended by all salesmen concerned. No source of information is insignificant if the information is valuable, and the salesman should take time to study the trade journals of his line and to read such articles as will add to his efficiency and success. If he finds suggestions which he believes would be valuable or interesting to any of his fellow employees, he should see that they are placed in the hands of those who might thus be helped.

**What Constitutes a Fair Price.** Many things go to make up the fixing of the selling price of an article. What would be a fair rate of advance on gross cost in case of one article might fall far short in the case of another. If the two occupy the same space, the entire stock in one case being turned out once a year while in the other it clears every three months, a twenty-five per cent gain on the second is more profitable to the house than a seventy-five per cent gain on the first. Some houses prefer to reduce the rate of profit and turn

the goods out oftener, while others do not desire a great volume of business but prefer to handle a smaller quantity of commodities at a higher rate of gain. In any case the selling price must be based on the cost of the goods plus the cost of doing business. Some goods are marked with the selling price only. Others have given the cost price with the selling price. In the former case the price should not be cut under any circumstances, and in the latter only by permission of the head of the department. What has been said in a previous chapter concerning price cutting applies here.

**Advertising Competitors.** No house is willing to become a gratuitous advertising agent for a competitor. Discussion of a competitor or of his goods, either favorably or unfavorably, is one method of advertising him. Another method is the sending out with the goods sold by the house, circulars or other advertising matter giving the address of some other firm. On the other hand, it is always good policy to inclose with goods for delivery some circulars or advertising matter of the house itself.

**Receiving and Answering Mail.** All mail matter coming into the house is supposed to pertain to the business of the house, hence all mail is opened as soon as it arrives. Any private mail matter should be received at the home of the employee, not at the business house. All incoming letters should be

answered upon the day of their receipt if possible. In answering letters, correctness of spelling and form, clearness and purity of language, vigor and conciseness of expression, courtesy and sincerity of purpose should go to make up replies which should be as nearly perfect as it is possible to make them. The last sentence of the letter should be concerned with the thing which it is desired shall remain in the mind of the reader, and should be a suggestion of something he is desired to do. In a good selling letter, as in a good selling canvass, there is often an opportunity to add a suggestion concerning something outside the main line of inquiry. The writer should read again the suggestions under "The prospect's own interests stand first" in Chapter VI. Incoming mail matter should be sorted carefully for filing, only that part of it being retained which is of permanent value to the business.

**House Rules for Employees.** Every house has rules which are laid down for the government of its employees. So long as these rules remain in force they should be observed by all concerned. If an employee thinks a rule is detrimental or unjust, he will usually be welcomed if he comes to the executive with a suggestion of improvement. Some houses have inspection committees which make tours of departments at intervals. Matters which come under their disapproval in the conduct of an individual are presented to the officers of the house for further action.

## CHAPTER XI

### SUGGESTIONS FROM A SELLING LETTER

THE following paragraphs are taken from a letter to the manager of a large selling house, from a manufacturing house whose product was partially sold and widely known through this same selling agency.

“ GENTLEMEN :

“ In pursuance of our telephone conversation with you yesterday, we are writing you in some detail about our goods. It is probable that a large part of this letter will be uninteresting or old to you, but if you can gather just a few new ideas or arguments, it will be time well spent for both of us.

“ As you know, of course, every successful salesman must really depend on his own individuality and his own ability to talk sales points in order to get the business. At the same time, it always helps even the best salesman to read and to listen to anything about the article he is selling. He never knows when he can pick up some little point which he can adjust and use to advantage.

“ A salesman is not supposed to memorize any sales arguments or information on his line, and to repeat

to his customer what he has learned. That would put him in the class with a parrot, and he really would not be much of a 'bird' at selling goods.

"As you know, a real salesman merely gets all the information and experience he can, and is always on the alert for new facts and new talking points. Then he puts this all into his own language, and changes it around to suit the different classes of trade and the different kinds of men. In other words, he uses his brains in order to determine in each case what facts to use, how to present them, and the like.

"In touching on the question of selling our product I will write very much in the way of talking directly to the salesman, using 'we' in the sense of you and I being together and going out after business, which is practically the case. So just keep in mind that 'you' will apply to the salesman and 'we' will mean the house.

"Our trade can be divided into several classes. There are fundamental arguments adapted to the selling of all kinds to all classes, but at the same time each class must be approached somewhat differently, as of course one cannot talk to a dealer in the same way in which he would talk to a manufacturing concern.

"The dealer class includes both jobbers and retailers. Another class of buyers is the consumers, in which class are the industrial concerns, public

institutions like cities, counties, those who buy for public buildings such as schools, and courthouses, office buildings, picture theaters, apartment houses, stores, and home owners, especially farmers.

“In order to be most successful you must study your goods and the general conditions in the territory you are working. Learn the general objections and difficulties, and apply yourself to overcome them. You will find certain objections in one locality and different objections in another. The idea is to learn them, to analyze them, and to readjust your selling arguments so that the prospective buyer will be convinced that in buying from you there will not be the objections they would have in buying from some one else.

“Also be sure to call on the different classes of trade at the most suitable time. City and town property owners can often be called upon to the best advantage in the evening when there is more leisure for the owner to consider improvements on his property; also when other members of the family can be interested.

“No matter what class of buyers you are approaching, there is one thing which should be kept in mind particularly, and that is ‘quality.’ When it comes to quality, there is an endless number of things which can be said in favor of our product, and these are good solid facts.

“ It is often best to appeal in a round-about way to that side of human nature which wants to progress and to keep up to the times. If a prospective buyer has once been persuaded to try other than an old-fashioned method and has not obtained good results, it is necessary to convince him that he would have had satisfactory results had he purchased our quality goods, and that now he has the opportunity to benefit, as have thousands of others who have felt as he does, but who tried out our goods and found what an advantage it was to use them.

“ To no one is the question of quality, which means satisfaction in every respect, of more importance than it is to the dealer. His whole success is based on building up a good trade among satisfied customers. Many dealers are short-sighted, and think that if they buy a cheap article and make larger profit, or get trade by cutting prices, that they are good merchants, whereas it is easy to calculate that in the long run such dealers are actually the losers. The dealer who cannot see for himself, or who cannot be shown, the fallacy in marketing goods of an inferior quality, is not a good man to whom to sell. Such a dealer's account would never be a satisfactory one, for he has not the brains to be successful.

“ Dealers, and all buyers for that matter, should recognize that the word ‘guarantee’ is no better than the one who is making the guaranty. How

often does the word 'guarantee' influence the unthinking or the unwise buyer! He does not realize that unless the concern or the man back of the guaranty is right, the guaranty is absolutely worthless.

"If you find a prospective buyer inclined to consider price, it is best to use every effort to show him why it is cheaper to consider quality. Where you find a man who wants quality it is a matter of showing him that you can furnish quality goods and are in position to do so at prices which actually cannot be equaled by any other concern.

"Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the importance of believing in your goods, in your house, and in yourself. You must not only be sincerely confident in order to get business, but you cannot get the business and hold it unless results prove to the buyer that the confidence which you have and which you imparted to him was justified. You can feel not only perfect confidence in the high quality of the goods you are offering, but you can be sure that we realize the importance of the goods being as represented in order that our customers shall not only be satisfied buyers but also valuable 'boosters.' Have it firmly established in your mind that you are selling goods of the very highest quality directly from the manufacturer whose success has been due to the furnishing of the best quality of goods at the lowest possible cost; direct from the manufacturer who has proved



from every standpoint the extra value of his products in the way of quality, service, and price. His proof is the many thousands of customers who have found that they could not buy better products elsewhere, few that were as good, and that they could not from any one else obtain so much value for the money.

“Do you appreciate what this means? If not, think it over, and get it well established in your mind. It means that no salesman can offer better values than you can, and very few can come anywhere near making as favorable offers. It means that you need fear no competition; that you can go anywhere, feeling sure that when it comes to quality and price you are not handicapped, but that you really have a handicap. It rests with you to work for a place among salesmen and to be worthy of the opportunity of offering what is in every respect the very best. It means that you are limited only by your own ability and progressiveness. It is for you to put forth the best that is in you; to be the success that you owe to yourself, your family, your friends, and society at large.

“So again we say: always remember, with never the least doubt, that no matter what kind of obstacles you may meet, you have behind you what is necessary for all good true salesmen to have, that is, a house which stands for the highest standard and for everything that means satisfied customers, namely: quality,

price, reliability, and fairness. Accept the opportunity, and use your ability to produce results. We believe you are a worthy representative, and sincerely trust you will come up to our expectations.

“Trusting you will find the above to be of some interest, we are

“Yours very truly,

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

## CHAPTER XII

### DEPARTMENT STORE INSTRUCTIONS

THE following instructions will apply in a general way to all department store selling, although in some details there will, of course, be variations. At this point attention should again be drawn to the difference between wholesale selling, or canvassing, in which the salesman must approach and interest his prospect, and retail, or department store selling, in which the prospect is interested and approaches the salesman. The suggestions which follow are based on the practices of large modern business houses.

**The Tally Book.** The *tally book* is a form of loose-leaf book in which all sales are entered by the salesmen. It contains a pad of sales checks in duplicate, both being divided into two or three parts or coupons by perforations. These sales checks are numbered consecutively, all the coupons of each check carrying the same number. Between the original and the duplicate is placed a sheet of carbon paper. In some stores the sales are entered in triplicate. When this is done, there is an additional pad of tissue sheets numbered to correspond to the sales checks, and the

carbon sheet is double-faced. In entering a sale a sheet of the tissue is placed back of the original so that in writing three copies are made.

Each salesman begins a new tally each day, placing the date and number at the top as indicated, although in some stores it is the practice to return to the salesman the remainder of the pad of checks used on the previous day, and to have him start the new tally with the next number on the sales checks, so that the first part of the tally will be left blank.

The tally itself is a card which is slipped into the front cover of the book. In some western states it is called the "index," while in Boston stores it is known as the "summary." It contains two columns ruled and numbered consecutively to correspond to the numbers on the sales checks. The amount of each sale is entered on the tally opposite the number corresponding to the sales check number, cash sales on one side, other sales on the other side of the number.

On the reverse of the tally is a sales report for the day. At any time during the day new pads and new tallies can be secured when the old ones are exhausted. If more than one tally is used on the same day, they are pinned together, one sales report being made out for the total, and this report handed to the head of the section. In some stores each salesman is expected to turn in his tally book at the close of the day, in others the books are collected by persons appointed for the pur-

pose who distribute them again the following morning. Some stores use two sets of books, placing those of one color in the hands of the sales force on one day and those of another color the following day, alternating through the week. In still others the tally alone is turned in, the books remaining in the hands of the salesmen. In any case the salesman should feel about the same solicitude as to his tally book as the soldier has for his rifle, and should not allow it to leave his immediate possession.

**Filling Out the Sales Check.** The sales check should be filled out at the time of each sale, and should show the date, kind of sale, kind of merchandise, quantity, price per unit, and extension or total amount of sale. The stub of the check may be at the top or bottom, but it should show the amount of money and other information for which it has spaces. The "Cash from Customer" space indicates the denomination of the money in a cash sale. In other sales it may be used to indicate "C. O. D.," "Charge," "Approval," "No. of Transfer," or "Due Package."

**The Tissue Sheet.** Each new sales book will require a new tissue book. Care must be taken to insure the agreement of the numbers on the tissue sheet with those of the corresponding sales checks and that the tissue is an exact duplicate of the check. These tissue sheets are for reference in the office of

the house, and should be preserved with the greatest care.

**To Avoid Errors.** Whatever one's style of writing, it must be legible. This is especially true of figures and capital letters. If an error is made on the sales check, it should not be erased under any circumstances. It should be taken to the floorman who will mark it "void." Then a new check can be made to replace the canceled one. Each check is numbered, and must be accounted for in one way or another. In case of error in measurement of goods sold, the head of stock of that section should be consulted, and the correction of the error should have his O.K. before the goods pass from the salesman's hands.

**Inspection of Sales.** Stores do not agree in their practice as to the matter of inspection. In some stores salesmen are not permitted to wrap their own sales. All goods must pass inspection before being wrapped, and the price should be on the article when turned in for inspection. In other stores only partial inspection is required, and in still others, none at all. In these cases there is what is denominated the "self-wrap" system, each section being provided with a cash register as a check on the amount of sales. Under this arrangement it becomes necessary to check up frequently on the stock of the section, especially where there are many salesmen under one head of stock, or there is likely to appear a discrepancy between the

inventories and the purchase books. Where a sale is made in which the article is fitted to the customer, inspection cannot be made. In cases of this kind the O.K. of the head of stock or of the floorman is accepted in lieu of inspection.

**Cash Sales.** The cash sale is the simplest of all. The salesman should repeat to the customer the amount of money received, and should count the change which is returned. If the goods are to be delivered, the address of the customer should be written in the proper space on the sales check. The duplicate should then be torn in two at the perforated line next to the address, the goods and the duplicate being given to the bundle wrapper, and the money and the original check with the address sent to the cashier.

**Sales to Be Charged.** If the customer has an account with the house and desires to have the goods charged, he may wish to take the purchase with him or he may prefer to have it delivered. In the former case the customer must be identified by the floorman and the account approved by the credit department before the goods leave the department in which they were purchased. In the latter case identification is unnecessary unless the goods are to be sent to an address which differs from that given when the account was last used, and the account can be approved after the customer has left the store.

## SALESMANSHIP

Date 12-3	Cash from Customer 2.00	Am't of Sale 1.50
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Book 68015	1201	Check 2
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Date 12-3	Cash from Customer 2.00	Am't of Sale 1.50
--------------	----------------------------	----------------------

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address Bought by O. K.	68015	1201	Check 2
----------------------------------	-------	------	------------

Quantity	Article	Price
1/2 doz.	Hddks. 3 <sup>rd</sup>	1.50

Pkgs. Enclosed 1

Date	Time
Name Mrs. James Smith	
Address 4215 E. 81 <sup>st</sup> Street	
Leave with janitor	Check
Book 68015	1201
2	2

CASH SALE—GOODS TO BE SENT.

A package is enclosed and special directions are given for delivery.



**Sales "Collect on Delivery."** Goods sold C. O. D. are treated as a charge sale and so entered on the tally. If a customer buys goods and finds he can pay only part of the purchase price, desiring to have the goods delivered and the balance collected on delivery, some stores require the salesman to make out two sales checks, both of them being O.K.'d by the floorman. Others require only one. All details of the transaction should appear on the C. O. D. check. If the order came by telephone, the number of the telephone order should be given. If it came from out of town, the house often requires a partial payment with the order. Great care must be exercised in making out the sales checks that goods which should be entered as "charge" sales are not entered C. O. D. A blunder of this kind usually causes the customer to feel indignant, and not infrequently costs the house the trade of the buyer, his family, and friends.

**Questions in Connection with Accounts.** If a customer asks to have a purchase charged and the credit department finds objection to compliance with the request, the salesman should ask the customer in as courteous a manner as possible to call at the general office of the store and arrange the matter. If there is confusion of accounts because of similarity of names, it is sometimes so arranged that customers use cards or token coins for individual accounts. Each of these is numbered, and when a purchase is made for a charge

## SALESMANSHIP

Date 12-3-	Cash from Customer chg	Am't of Sale .50
Book 68015	2603	Check 4

Date 12-3-	Cash from Customer chg	Am't of Sale .50
Name <u>Mrs. J. M. Lamb.</u>		
Address <u>8962 Cedar Ave.</u>		
Bought by O. K.	68015	2603
		Check 4

Quantity	Article	Price	
4	Collars	2/15	50

Pkg. Enclosed

Date	Time
Name	
Address	
Book 68015	2603
	Check 4

## CHARGE SALE — GOODS TO BE TAKEN.

Instead of "unit price" the price of two articles is given. In this sale the buyer must be identified.

account, the card or coin is handed to the salesman by the customer in order to identify the account without delay. One who has an account in his own name and desires some other member of the family to make a purchase on the same account should send a written order to that effect with the one who is to make the purchase. In some stores this order would be referred to the floorman, in others it would be pinned to the sales check and sent to the auditing department.

**Credits and Allowances on Returned Goods.** All returned goods should be placed in the hands of the floorman or some one who has been appointed for that purpose. In some of the larger stores a special department has been established for the receiving of goods returned. While in many stores the credit received for goods returned must be traded out in other goods, the rule is by no means universal. Some have gone so far in the opposite direction as to make a special feature, and even to advertise the fact, of returning purchase money when the goods are returned. Of course if the original goods were taken out on a charge account, the return merely entitles the customer to so much credit on account. Purchase money is refunded on cash purchases in some places by the floorman, in others at the general office. "Allowances" are made on damaged or imperfect goods, or goods which are never received by the purchaser.

## SALESMANSHIP

Date 12-3	Cash from Customer chg	Am't of Sale 2.75
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Book 68015	Check 1312 18
---------------	------------------

Date 12-3	Cash from Customer chg	Am't of Sale 2.75
--------------	---------------------------	----------------------

Name Mrs. J. C. Jones

Address 21876 Euclid Ave.

Bought by 4289

O. K.

Book 68015	Check 1312 18
---------------	------------------

Quantity	Article	Price		
3 yds	lace	50	1	50
1/2 yd	lace	2.50	1	25
			2	75

Pkgs. Enclosed

Date	Time
Name <u>Miss Mary Smith</u>	
Address <u>8692 N. V. 36th St.</u>	
Book 68015	Check 1312 18

CHARGE SALE — GOODS TO BE SENT TO AN ADDRESS  
OTHER THAN THE BUYER'S.

An account number is given, but the buyer should be identified.

In all these cases blanks are provided and must be properly filled out when the credit is allowed, either by the floorman or a salesman whom he designates.

**“ Will Call ” or “ Lay Away ” Packages.** A partial payment may be made on a purchase and the package left until payment is completed. Usually a definite time is stated, and if such packages are not called for within the time limit, they are sold and the amount paid at the time of the purchase may be forfeited by the original customer. In sales of this kind a receipt is given the purchaser for the amount paid, the sales check is made out for the full amount, and later payments are made at the office.

**Deliveries and Shipments.** In all cases where deliveries or shipments are to be made the address of the consignee should be as complete and as accurate as possible. It is very easy to go wrong in writing the address. Twenty-fifth and Forty-fifth streets are easily confused. Twos and threes are often misunderstood and so interchanged. Initials, apartment house suite numbers, street numbers, the spelling of names of persons and streets, and the numbers of rooms in hotels and business blocks must be repeated until there is no doubt of their accuracy. Perhaps the most frequent oversight in this connection is in failing to give street names and numbers in suburban towns. Some salesmen seem to think that because packages are to go to a smaller town, street addresses are not of

## SALESMANSHIP

Date <i>12-3</i>	Cash from Customer <i>C. O. D.</i>	Am't of Sale <i>3. 00</i>
Book <b>68015</b>		Check <b>3210</b> <i>22</i>

Date <i>12-3</i>	Cash from Customer <i>C. O. D.</i>	Am't of Sale <i>3. 00</i>
Name <i>Miss Mary Smith</i>		
Address <i>8952 West 24<sup>th</sup> St.</i>		
Bought by <i>Phone order 486</i>	<b>3210</b>	Check <i>22</i>
O. K. <b>68015</b>		

Quantity	Article	Price		
<i>2</i>	<i>Best waists</i>	<i>1.50</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>00</i>

Pkgs. Enclosed

Date	Time
Name <i>Miss Mary Smith</i>	
Address <i>8952 West 24<sup>th</sup> St.</i>	
Book <b>68015</b>	Check <b>3210</b> <i>22</i>

C. O. D. SALE.

Order received by telephone. The address of buyer must be written twice.

so much importance, but they are usually quite as necessary in these cases as they are in a larger city.

Blundering in this matter causes loss of time in delivery, inconvenience or loss to the customer, additional expense to the house for extra handling, hauling, tracing, and adjusting, and often the practical loss of the goods because of the worthless condition to which they have been reduced by this long-continued drifting. One of the most successful methods of avoiding this kind of errors, and one which reduced the trouble arising from this source to twenty-five per cent of the previous amount in one large house, is to have the salesman *show the address to the customer* at the time of the purchase.

A customer will sometimes buy an article which he wishes to wear immediately, leaving the old one for delivery. Such an arrangement should be noted on the sales check in some manner, with the approval of the floorman. If special delivery is desired, the matter should be referred to the floorman. If the customer has goods, bought elsewhere, which he desires wrapped with those secured in the house for delivery, notation of the fact of inclosure should be made on the sales check, and this again should have the approval of the floorman. It is usually wise to refuse inclosures which are fragile.

Some stores pay expressage or freight on purchases reaching a certain amount, within a limited territory.

## SALESMANSHIP

Date <b>12-3</b>	Cash from Customer <b>G.O.D.</b>	Am't of Sale <b>4 00</b>
Book <b>68014</b>	<b>7310</b>	Check <b>17</b>

Date <b>12-3</b>	Cash from Customer <b>G.O.D.</b>	Am't of Sale <b>4 00</b>
Name <b>Mrs. James Brown</b>		Check <b>17</b>
Address <b>Suite 4 The Director 2090 E. 100th St.</b>		
Bought by <b>O. K.</b>		
Book <b>68014</b>	<b>7310</b>	

Quantity	Article	Price
1	Coat	6 00
	By Cash	2 00
	Bal	4 00
	<b>O. K. J. M. B.</b>	
Pkgs. Enclosed		

Date	Time
Name <b>Mrs. James Brown</b>	
Address <b>The Director 2090 E. 100th St.</b>	
Suite 4	
Book <b>68014</b>	Check <b>17</b>
<b>7310</b>	

PART CASH — PART C. O. D. SALE.

The "am't of sale" space shows the balance to be collected by the driver. Must be O.K.'d by the floorman.



Others go even farther, and place no limit on either distance or amount, provided the method of shipment of the goods is left to the discretion of the store management. Shipping tags should be attached to goods which are to go out in this way, and these should bear the street address and the name of the state as well as the name of the town of destination.

**Transfers.** In all up-to-date department stores some system of transfers is in operation. The object is to add to the convenience of the customer by making it unnecessary for him to carry all his purchases from place to place in the store while buying. In any case the customer is given a paper which is called a "transfer check," "traveler," or "till-book," according to the part of the country in which he is trading, and upon this each purchase is entered by the salesman from whom it is bought. This is the only thing the customer carries with him. A sales check is made out by each salesman, giving the transfer number and the customer's name and address. This goes with the sale to the inspector, and thence to the central transfer desk or till, where the customer receives all his purchases at once, or whence the entire list of purchases is sent to the delivery department. It is especially desirable that customers from out of town use the transfer system to avoid the shipment of several parcels to the same address when all purchases might go in one package.

## SALESMANSHIP

Date 12-3	Cash from Customer 2 <sup>00</sup>	Am't of Sale 2 <sup>00</sup>
Book 68014		Check 7310 18

Date 12-3	Cash from Customer 2 <sup>00</sup>	Am't of Sale 2 <sup>00</sup>
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address Bought by O. K.	68014	7310	Check 18
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Quantity	Article	Price
	By cash on C.O.D.	2 <sup>00</sup>
	O.K. J. M. B.	

\*Kgs Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Time
Name	
Address	
Book 68014	Check 7310 18

CASH CHECK OF PART CASH—PART C. O. D. SALE WHEN  
TWO CHECKS ARE MADE OUT.

Here the "am't of sale" space shows cash paid in on the sale. Must  
be O.K.'d by the floorman.

**Discounts and Special Prices.** Stores usually allow special rates of discount on goods which are purchased for business purposes by certain classes of buyers. Hours and special rates are also designated for employees who desire to make purchases for their own use. In the case of special sales at bargain prices some of the rules governing the regular methods of the store are frequently suspended. In all these cases the employee should be careful to make such inquiries as will save him from the danger of blundering.

**Bank Checks, Money, and Orders.** A package should never be given to the customer until the cash slip, with or without change, has been returned from the cashier's office, so the salesman is sure the money turned in was correct in quality and denomination. It is interesting to note that in this connection it is the two-dollar bill which causes more discussion and is the occasion for more efforts to secure extra change than any other denomination of money. If a customer presents a bank check, post office or express money order, or any paper other than cash, the one presenting the paper should be identified by an employee, and the paper referred to the credit department for approval.

**Merchandise Certificates.** Some stores sell merchandise certificates or "gift certificates" especially near the holiday season. These are redeemable in merchandise at their face value. Some of them are

## SALESMANSHIP

Date.	Cash from Customer	Am't of Sale
12-3	C.O.D.	1.10
Book	Check	
68015	6412	30

Date	Cash from Customer	Am't of Sale
12-3	C.O.D.	1.10
Name Mrs James Brown		
Address 1856 E. 105 <sup>th</sup> St.		
Bought by		Check
O. K.	68015	6412 30

Quantity	Article	Price
2	shades	.55
		1.10
Driver exchange for		
	2 shades at	45¢
and collect 20¢		
Pkgs. Enclosed		

Date	Time
Name Mrs James Brown	
Address 1856 E. 105 <sup>th</sup> St	
Book	Check
68015	6412 30

## DIFFERENT VALUE C. O. D. EXCHANGE CHECK.

Directions to driver in the body of the check. The goods to be returned were paid for when purchased.

transferable while others are good only when presented by the person named on the face. In case the goods desired on a certificate fall a few cents short of the face value, the balance is refunded in cash ; otherwise the certificate will usually be redeemed in merchandise only in order to carry out the wishes of the one who purchased it.

**Complaints and Adjustments.** Complaints come from customers who have failed to receive goods purchased, who have received the wrong kind of goods, who have been disappointed by some kind of clerical error, who have found the service in the store imperfect in one or more particulars, or who feel that an error has occurred in the credit department. Adjustments are required when goods have been found defective, have been injured or broken in delivery, or have failed to give a satisfactory degree of service. Reports concerning any one of these conditions are referred to persons designated by the house, with any information the salesman originally concerned can give, to aid in the satisfactory adjustment of the relationship between the store and its patron. "The customer is always in the right" has come to be a widely accepted standard, and many store managers testify to their belief that a policy based upon this maxim is the most profitable in the end. Errors, disputes, and other difficulties arising within the store's sales force should be referred to the floorman of the department.

## SALESMANSHIP

Date 12-3	Cash from Customer X X	Am't of Sale X X
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Book 68014	1610	Check 14
---------------	------	-------------

Date 12-3	Cash from Customer X X	Am't of Sale X X
--------------	---------------------------	---------------------

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bought by \_\_\_\_\_  
 O. K. \_\_\_\_\_

68014	1610	Check 14
-------	------	-------------

Quantity	Article	Price
1	pr. shoes	4 <sup>00</sup>
1	pr. shoes nt.	4 <sup>00</sup>
		X X
O. K. J. M. B.		
Pkgs. Enclosed		

Date	Time
Name _____	
Address _____	
Book 68014	1610
Check 14	

## EVEN VALUE EXCHANGE CHECK.

Must be O.K.'d by the floorman. The entry on the tally would be X.

**Salesmen's Knowledge of the Store.** Salesmen are sometimes inclined to criticize the "red tape" of rules and regulations governing the employees of a large store. This is usually because the individual's vision is too narrow to see the relationship among the many departments and the necessity for system to keep the entire machine working smoothly. Each salesman should make it a point to know where each department is, who is in charge of it, and what goods are for sale in it, so that he can answer any reasonable question concerning any department and direct customers to the proper place to secure the article for which they are seeking. His knowledge of the names of departments should be accurate. For example, he should distinguish between the "Art Department" and the "Art Needlework Department" if both exist. A new department should be no exception to this rule.

No one should assume the attitude which says, "It is the floorman's business to direct people, not mine." Such a suggestion indicates half-heartedness of service, or, to speak more accurately, it is "mouth and hand" service with no heart at all. If the salesman does not know where an article is to be found, he should not send a customer away to wander in a haphazard search until some one else sets him right, but should take the time to make inquiry and should give the correct direction.

## SALESMANSHIP

Date <b>12-3</b>	Cash from Customer <b>Due Pkg.</b>	Am't of Sale <b>15.00</b>
Book <b>68015</b>	<b>8605</b>	Check <b>8</b>

Date <b>12-3</b>	Cash from Customer <b>Due Pkg.</b>	Am't of Sale <b>15.00</b>
Name <b>Miss Edith Green</b>		
Address <b>1123 E. 83rd St.</b>		
Bought by <b>O. K.</b>	<b>68015</b>	Check <b>8</b>
<b>8605</b>		

Quantity	Article	Price
1	Plume	15.00
	By cash	5.00
	Due	10.00

Pkgs. Enclosed

Date	Time
Name	
Address	
Book <b>68015</b>	Check <b>8</b>
<b>8605</b>	

## DUE PACKAGE CHECK.

The full amount (\$15.00) would be entered on the tally in the charge column.



**Keeping Informed on Store News.** The advertising department of the store gleans a few facts from each of the many departments and combines them into a whole which is spread broadcast to the readers of the daily papers. The bulletin board for employees is used to give information which all those connected with the house are expected to heed. Special notices are sent through the house from time to time in order that some important matter may the more speedily come to the attention of all departments. Many establishments publish a monthly or weekly pamphlet containing matter pertinent to the business and its employees. The salesman cannot afford to overlook any of these sources of knowledge as to what is in progress all around him. The more nearly he becomes a "walking encyclopedia" of accurate store news the more valuable he grows in carrying forward the activities of his house.

**Visiting and Gossiping.** A salesman should let it be thoroughly understood by any of his friends who show a disposition to visit him during business hours that the store is a place for *business*, not for social calls. Still more emphatically should a salesman avoid gossip with other salesmen during business hours and about the counters. Customers often feel that they are being discussed if two or more salesmen are talking near where they are shopping. While the feeling may be without real cause, the results

## SALESMANSHIP

Date 12-3	Cash from Customer chg 6423	Am't of Sale 2.50
Book 68015	6012	Check 32

Date 12-3	Cash from Customer chg 6423	Am't of Sale 2.50
Name Mrs. H. L. Appleby	Address Main Street, Massillon, Ohio	Bought by self
O. K.	68015	6012
		Check 32

Quantity	Article	Price
1	Mat	2.50

Pkgs. Enclosed

Date	Time
Name	
Address	
Book 68015	6012
	Check 32

CHARGE SALE TO AN OUT OF TOWN CUSTOMER ON A  
TRANSFER CHECK.

Express charges would be paid by the house. Street, town, and  
state must be named.

will be the same as if it were fully justified. Other customers will think that a store where the salesmen have time to gossip must be doing a poor business, and will begin to wonder why. Large stores are very strict in this matter of visiting, and a salesman who disregards the prohibition not only barricades his road to promotion but seriously jeopardizes his position with the house. The rule applies to the salesmen of other houses also. They are not allowed to call on the house sales force in order to promote the movement of goods they have sold to the house.

**Neglecting Customers.** The customer who enters a store where he finds no salesman in sight, and where he must stand or wander about until a clerk has finished a personal letter, or has come to a convenient stopping place in a book, or has completed the embroidery or the crocheting of a certain pattern, is likely to conclude that he has entered some enchanted place instead of a business house, and to leave lest the spell fall upon him also. If he finds the clerk polishing a shoe, facing a mirror with a powder-puff in vigorous action, arranging the hair, or manicuring the nails, he is likely to feel the embarrassment incident to having intruded into a boudoir with the accompanying determination to avoid a repetition of the offense.

**Absence from the Department.** Certain hours are designated by a store during which employees are permitted to go to other departments than their own

## SALESMANSHIP

Date <i>12-3</i>	Cash from Customer <i>M. O.</i> <i>C 4291</i>	Am't of Sale <i>.50</i>
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Book <i>68015</i>	Check <i>4020</i>	<i>10</i>
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Date <i>12-3</i>	Cash from Customer <i>M. O.</i> <i>C 4291</i>	Am't of Sale <i>.50</i>
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address Bought by <i>O. K.</i>	<i>68015</i>	<i>4020</i>	Check <i>10</i>
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Quantity	Article	Price	
<i>1/2 yd</i>	<i>silk</i>	<i>1.00</i>	<i>.50</i>
<i>Mrs. James Smith</i>			
<i>1416 Howard Ave</i>			
<i>Akron, Ohio</i>			
Pkgs. Enclosed _____			

Date	Time
Name _____	
Address _____	
Book <i>68015</i>	Check <i>4020</i>
<i>10</i>	

MAIL ORDER CHECK No. 4291.

Customer's name and address in the body of the check.

to do personal shopping. Of course, it is understood that purchases made under these circumstances are for the immediate use of the employee and are under no circumstances to be resold to outside persons. Some stores add the privilege of buying for one who is dependent upon the employee also. Permission to leave the department comes in the form of a shopping pass or permit which is secured from the floorman and which must be presented at each counter where purchases are made. The salesman should never presume to take this matter into his own hands, and leave without the knowledge of the floorman. The force in that particular department may be short-handed; there may be prospect of a special influx of customers; some inquiry may be raised which demands an answer from a particular individual, and if he cannot be found, since no one knows where he is nor why he is missing, the entire department is embarrassed.

**Doing and Making Extra Work.** When some members of the sales force of a department are absent, during the lunch hour, for shopping purposes, or on account of sickness, it becomes necessary for the rest of the section to do extra work. At other times there may be no customers for some time at a certain counter. This is an opportunity for those in charge to see that all goods are clean, dustless, and in order, and that any accumulation of paper, string, or other litter is cleared out so that the advantages

## SALESMANSHIP

Date <i>12-3</i>	Cash from Customer <i>4253</i>	Am't of Sale <i>300</i>
Book <b>68015</b>	<b>2306</b>	Check <b>14</b>

Date <i>12-3</i>	Cash from Customer <i>4253</i>	Am't of Sale <i>300</i>
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address Bought by O. K. <b>68015</b>	<b>2306</b>	Check <b>14</b>
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Quantity	Article	Price
<i>1</i>	<i>pr. gloves</i>	<i>100 net</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>pr. gloves</i>	<i>200</i>
		<i>300</i>
<i>Miss H. Smith</i>		
<i>House</i>		
Pkgs. Enclosed _____		

Date	Time
Name _____	
Address _____	
Book <b>68015</b>	Check <b>2306</b> <b>14</b>

CASH SALE TO AN EMPLOYEE ON A TRANSFER CHECK.

The word "house" indicates an employee.

of neatness and order may not be overlooked. The first thing to be done in the morning in each section is the arrangement of the "store trim." This includes special display and the laying out of new goods to meet the demands which the daily advertisements are expected to create.

On the other hand, it is only the lazy or indifferent member of the force who will place waste paper or other refuse in drawers or boxes, thus making it necessary for some one else to clean up after him, or who will add to the already extra duty of other salesmen by spending the lunch hour, shopping time, or rest period in wandering aimlessly from counter to counter. The rest period is provided especially for the women of the sales force. If used in compliance with the purpose for which it is given, it becomes a valuable relief to the strain of the day's work. Those who fail to appreciate its significance and fritter it away foolishly might as well, perhaps better, be deprived of it.

**Holding Waiting Customers.** A salesman will often find a second customer coming to him while he is serving another. There may at times be two or three waiting. His ability to hold these is a valuable quality. It must be done without neglecting the one in hand or allowing him to feel that he is not receiving complete service and attention. An occasional smile and word of appreciation to those who are waiting will often add much to their patience. In some lines it is

possible for a skillful salesman to care for several customers at the same time. It is well for young salesmen to work into this slowly.

**Responsibility for Goods.** Many department stores employ special house detectives for the protection of the goods. Salesmen are sometimes inclined to assume that the detectives have relieved them of all responsibility in this direction. In departments where small articles are easily picked up salesmen should be constantly on guard. Considerable losses may be prevented by watchfulness. Persons acting in a manner to arouse suspicion should be reported to the floorman or to the house detective for further action. Under no circumstances should the salesman take the initiative and accuse the suspected person. Such action on his part is likely to cause the house serious consequences.

**Knowledge of Stock.** The inefficient clerk who does not know where to find the article called for frequently takes the easy way out of his ignorance by saying, "We're out of that." This is sometimes done in the face of the customer's knowledge to the contrary. Every salesman should take the time and put forth the effort necessary to learn the different kinds of goods, the various qualities, how much of each is in stock, and just where it is kept. If an article is called for repeatedly, and the stock is running low, that fact should be reported so that it may be included in the next order by the buyer of the department concerned.



## CHAPTER XIII

### DEPARTMENT STORE INSTRUCTIONS—(*Concluded*)

**Proper Use of the Telephone.** The telephone may be the best salesman in the house or it may be made a business loser. In some places great care is taken to have all other employees courteous and attentive, while the most impertinent boy or girl in the house is considered capable of answering the telephone. Time is precious here. It is inexpressibly silly to keep the called person guessing who has called, and while this is going on the probabilities are that some one is impatiently waiting to use the line for legitimate business purposes. The questionable word "hello" is no longer used in answering the telephone by those who keep abreast of the times.

Two gossips blocking the public highway discussing politics or the fashions would be summarily removed by the police. The same drastic action is due in case of two who so far forget or disregard the public character of the telephone. The most skillful and diplomatic salesman in the house is not too valuable to be placed at this little instrument which can be made so large a factor in the getting and holding

of trade, new and old. Harlow N. Higginbotham says, "It is not too much to say that good service is the most profitable thing which the merchant can sell, and that poor service is, by the same token, the most unprofitable thing that he can have about his store."

**Telephone-selling Department.** To such an extent has the practice of shopping by telephone increased that department stores have found it necessary to have a department established for this purpose. A battery of telephone switchboards is arranged in a room where each is presided over by a "telephone shopper." This convenience is used by invalids who cannot reach the store in person, young mothers whose home duties confine them closely, business women who cannot leave their places of activity, those who are to a greater or less extent indifferent regarding the final selection of the articles to be purchased, those who prefer to trust the judgment of the salesman rather than their own, and those who ordinarily do their own shopping but are hindered at times by inclemency of weather.

**Requirements of the Telephone Shopper.** Telephone shoppers are usually recruited from the ranks of the store's regular shoppers. What has been said of salesmen in general applies to the telephone shopper as well, with special emphasis on such qualities as courtesy, patience, tact, and self-control. In many instances the shopper must do the customer's thinking,

and active suggestion is a strong element in accomplishing the best results where the purchaser cannot see the goods. Knowledge of stock and of the special activities of the store are here so essential that the telephone shopper must have an almost perfect picture of the store in mind at any given time. The alert shopper will also soon learn the peculiarities of different telephone customers and will be able from this knowledge to increase the list of acceptable suggestions.

**Building a Clientele.** After a time, customers will select one of the store's telephone shoppers, and when calling to give an order will ask for that shopper by number. An acquaintance thus grows up between customers and shoppers, although in most cases it never extends farther than a knowledge of each other's voices. Salesmen at the counters can secure the same kind of a clientele. In many ways this is a valuable asset to the salesman, for in case he changes from one house to another he may be able to transfer a large part of this trade with him.

**Keeping Customers Informed.** A complete list of customers with correct street addresses supplies a channel through which most effective advertising can be done by means of circular letters. This can be used to give information to regular customers a little in advance of that supplied to the general public through the columns of the daily papers, thus giving the friends

of the store first choice in special sales. In a similar way the telephone shoppers call up their customers and tell them of special bargains and new goods.

**Details of a Telephone Order.** An order taken by telephone must be completed during the initial conversation. At the counter, changes, corrections, and additions or deductions may be made after the salesman has shown the goods. This cannot be done in telephone selling. If the customer calls the shopper and says a pair of hose is wanted, the shopper must have ready a complete list of questions which will prevent the possibility of error in filling the order. This information will include color, material, weight, price, sex and approximate age of wearer, and whether regular or extra size is required. The customer may reverse this process by asking whether the store has in stock the article wanted in color, size, weight, etc., as desired. In addition to these items the shopper must secure the correct street address, telephone number, and name of the one to whom the goods are to be sent, and whether the customer has a charge account or not.

**What the Salesman Has a Right to Expect of the House.** Among the things which the salesman has a right to expect is a *living wage*. Most houses have adopted a "minimum wage" at which beginners are expected to start. This should be enough to provide the necessities of living. Anything short of

this is placing a premium on practices which injure the house and the reputation of business houses generally as much as they do the employee. Locality and conditions of living are important factors in determining the minimum wage.

The employee has a right to expect *wholesome conditions* under which to do his work. These include properly lighted and well-ventilated rooms; pure drinking water; individual lockers, soap, towels, and drinking cups; a convenient and comfortable place in which to lunch; adequate fire protection and fire escapes; and sufficient elevator accommodation. Equipment which is modern and convenient, and prompt recognition of honest and efficient service, will return to the house which provides them results far in excess of their cost.

**What the House Has a Right to Expect of the Salesman.** The house has a right to expect *efficiency of service*. Much is said and written about efficiency, some of it being practical and valuable. Many institutions secure the services of an efficiency expert on the supposition that his principal accomplishment shall be to enable them to put forth a larger product. Others have a notion that the services of such a man are for the purpose of saving waste in materials. While the net result of efficiency should include both of these ends, they should not be the chief thought in the effort for its accomplishment.

The salesman's efficiency is largely an individual matter. The comfort, happiness, and development of the person who is doing the work should be the thought at the bottom of the effort toward efficiency. A reasonable amount of exercise, especially in the open air, taken every day, will produce a sound body under ordinary conditions. Similarly, a reasonable amount of mental exercise, taken regularly, will keep within that body a sound mind. The indulgence in some kind of effort outside of that which is one's regular occupation will keep alive his interest in his surroundings. A persistent program, including these and other activities, will do much toward keeping any one efficient.

"They're all out to-day," was the greeting received by a sales manager, as he came to the department of women's suits and skirts, from one of the salesmen of the department. "Who are?" he asked. "The lookers," was the reply. "I haven't made a sale to-day." The manager stopped to see, and as customer after customer came within range this salesman approached them with "Can I show you something?" or "Are you waited on?" After a time the manager turned his attention to another salesman who approached a mother and daughter standing not far away, and heard the salesman say to them, "I was just going to put these skirts back into stock, but they are so pretty I must show them to you before I do so." One of the skirts never went back into stock, and when the manager asked this salesman how sales were going on this particular morning, the answer was, "Oh, splendidly! Only one customer has failed to make a purchase this morning and I am sure she will return."

The house also has a right to expect that the salesman shall have *good habits*. The first and most destructive of the bad habits which come to mind is, of course, that of drinking, with its train of ruinous and degrading consequences. But there are other habits which detract from the salesman's efficiency. Many seem to think that the house has no jurisdiction over the actions and time of employees after business hours, but such use of this time as will send the salesman to his work the next morning with aching head, dull eyes, a befogged brain, and exhausted body is robbing the house of service to which it is entitled as well as closing the avenues which lead to the future success and advancement of the salesman himself.

A review of the suggestions made in Chapter II on the salesman's health, mental attitude, and other desirable qualities will be found very appropriate in connection with the requirements of department-store selling.

**Education of Employees.** Many large department stores have established schools for their employees where instruction is given in methods of selling. This is given in the form of theory and practice. After a certain amount of suggestion, there are demonstration sales, first by skilled salesmen and later by members of the class. Suggestions and criticisms by the class add much to the value of the training.

The probability is that young men and young women

who enter the field of selling from the high school will do so through the department or retail store. A course in salesmanship in the high school will do for the pupils who go out to earn their livelihood as much as or more than many of the other courses which have been held sacred by long usage. This will also make it unnecessary for the merchant to provide a postgraduate course for those who have had the advantage of such a high school training.

There are still a few persons, some of them in business and some quite successful, who hark back to the days of apprenticeship and minimize the need of preparation for a business career. It must be remembered that a start at the present time is altogether a different matter from a start forty or even twenty years ago. The competition these persons would meet now if they began their careers with no more preparation than was needed then would put them out of the race in a short time.

**Employment of Children.** Recent legislation has shown a tendency to greater strictness against the employment of young children in any kind of industrial or commercial activity. Some employers felt that this was a hardship at first, but the change has apparently demonstrated that older hands are capable of accomplishing so much more in the same time that child labor is unprofitable to the employer as well as to the child.



**Keeping Up the Standard of Service.** However desirable it may be to make a good record of sales, and to fill the tally, customers must not be made to feel uncomfortable or that the salesman would prefer them to go away. The impression left in their minds should be that they would rather come back to this particular store than go anywhere else. They should therefore feel at home, free to come and go, at liberty to ask questions or to seek advice from those whose knowledge of goods and experience in handling them make them expert in suggesting the best answers. Therefore the spirit of service should so dominate the house and its sales force that a child who knows what is wanted will receive the same treatment and quality of goods as would be accorded the most experienced shopper.

A little stock girl in a large store saw three women approach a frame of skirts from which the salesmen had been temporarily called away. With a smile she asked if they could wait a moment until the salesman returned, when any information they desired would be given. One of them asked if the girl knew the price of a skirt which was pointed out. She did, and by the time the salesman returned the sale was made except for filling out the check or schedule. Other purchases were to be made by the trio, and they requested the privilege of taking the same girl with them as guide. She was so useful that before leaving they asked for her name and home address so that as they traveled further they could send remembrances showing their appreciation of the service she had rendered.

A high standard of service should be maintained in all transactions. Where sales are large this is much

easier than in such a department, for example, as that devoted to buttons. Many times a customer desires only a few cheap buttons — perhaps only one. The salesman knows that the sale will amount to very little from his viewpoint. Or the customer may be extremely exacting and offensive in manner. Nevertheless the same ideals must be kept before the mind of the salesman.

A new salesman had been employed in the men's furnishing department. To him came the floorman introducing a customer with the statement, "Mr. A desires to purchase a flannel outing shirt." "Do you want an outing shirt?" inquired the salesman. "Yes," was the reply. "What material would you like?" was the next question. "I want a flannel shirt," reiterated the customer. "O, yes," continued the salesman without making a move, "and what color do you prefer?" "Why, I don't know. In what colors do they come?" "We have them in blue, pink, and tan stripes." "Well," said the customer, "I don't really care very much; suppose you show me the blue." "Yes," said the salesman, still making no move toward bringing out any goods, "and what size, please?" Turning to the floorman, the customer inquired, "Is there any way in which to make this man produce?"

In contrast with the above failure was the experience of a man who was regarded as a difficult customer because of his exacting disposition. He entered the leather goods department on an occasion with the statement, "I don't suppose it's of any use to ask whether you have a leather case of such and such dimensions divided into divisions which would fit my requirements." Instantly the salesman produced paper and pencil and by means of a few questions secured a rough sketch of what was wanted. "No, Mr. B, we do not have anything just like that, but how soon do you need it? We can have it made for you in a few days." "We are on our way

to A——," replied the customer, "and cannot wait." "Will you return this way from A——?" persisted the salesman. "Yes." "If it will answer your purpose, I will see that it is ready for you by that time, Mr. B." "All right, sir, go ahead."

True to his promise, the salesman had the case, and it was found entirely satisfactory when Mr. B and his wife called upon their return. "I am very glad it is satisfactory," said the salesman, who now knew Mr. B's business standing; "we shall have it delivered at your residence, and if satisfactory to you, bill it to your office." "Say, young man," responded Mr. B, "this comes nearest to doing business of any store I have found." At this point Mrs. B suggested that she believed she would try the hat department, since they had done so well in leather. They were directed properly, and while making their way thither the leather goods salesman used the house telephone to such good purpose that when they reached the millinery department, they were greeted by name and in the same spirit of service.

**Employees' Courtesy to Each Other.** The spirit of service involves the spirit of courtesy, and this should extend to the relationships between those who work together to carry on the business of the house. When a customer is to be taken to another department, the salesman who takes him there should not address the fellow employee as "Tom" or "Mame" or "Shorty," but as Mr. G. or Miss H. However free may be the intercourse among employees outside of business hours, when a salesman addresses a stock girl, a messenger boy, or a porter in the presence of customers, it should be by using the name of the person addressed rather than a diminutive or nickname. Better service will result from this practice, and it will

add to the cultivation of the same kind of habit of courtesy toward customers when making suggestions of additional purchases.

One of the executives of a well-known department store having been requested to secure a canary bird for a friend went to the department where the birds were on sale and stated his errand to the salesman. "Very good," replied the salesman, "if you have the time and desire to make a selection, you can sit here until you find the bird whose song you like best. If you prefer not to wait, however, I have selected three good singers and have set them aside." "I shall be satisfied with your selection. What is the price of the bird?" asked the executive. "One seventy-five," was the reply, followed immediately by the question, "Has your friend ever owned a bird?" "No." "Then you will want to see a suitable cage, of course; they are over here, and one of these fenders would just fit that one. Birds, you know, have to bathe frequently. Various styles of bathing dishes are made, probably to suit the owners' varying tastes rather than the birds'." In this manner were added seed, cuttle bone, and other necessary or desirable accessories until the outfit was complete, the total sale amounting to something over eight dollars.

Courteous and helpful suggestion not only added between three and four hundred per cent to the above sale, but if it had not been given, the owner of the bird would have had to go or send somewhere again and again for the necessary accessories. This would have caused loss of time, probable injury to the original purchase or entire loss of it, and much inconvenience, all of which were saved by the thoughtfulness of the salesman. To carry the illustration to another depart-

ment, if a customer should ask for a piece of linen for embroidery, the salesman could very properly lay out with it the smaller pieces of the same design. He could make inquiry as to the size of needles which the customer had for use, and show the silks which would produce the best results in the outlines.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SALESMAN'S REWARDS

**Store Records of Salesmen.** Among the items which go to make up the cost of carrying on business is the *expense of selling the goods*. This varies with different kinds of commodities. In department stores the item of salesmen's salaries is calculated as ranging from three and one half per cent in some departments to ten in others. The average is about six or seven per cent. This means that if the minimum wage in the store is eight dollars per week, and a new salesman is employed in a department where the selling cost is four per cent, he must sell two hundred dollars' worth of goods each week in order to cover his salary.

Most stores do, and every store should, keep a record of the work of each salesman. This should show the total amount of his sales for each week or month, whether customers request the services of this particular salesman, the increase or decrease in the number of such requests, promptness in arriving at the store and in meeting other engagements, neatness and order of stock, frequency of blunders, and

notation of voluntary extra effort put forth in any direction. In keeping such a record the store is doing no more than simple justice to its salesmen. The salesman can easily keep his own record for himself, and from it can readily ascertain whether he is producing more or less than he is costing the house.

If a salesman's ambition carries him no farther than this limit of his cost, however, there must be some reason which should be ascertained. Perhaps the house gives no stimulus to encourage greater effort; perhaps the salesman is merely lazy. If he is willing to plod along the dead level of mediocrity or inferiority, nothing further need be said to him. But if the heights of success and comfort look attractive, let him take stock of himself and his surroundings at stated intervals and measure his progress.

### **Methods of Determining the Salesman's Salary.**

A few houses have a fixed rate or "flat" salary schedule, and depend upon the newcomers to take the place of the older employees who move out of the business. These stores form a kind of preparatory school from which the ranks of the sales forces of wiser managements are recruited. Others add to this flat rate some kind of bonus to each employee on certain holidays, and such gratuities soon come to be expected as part of the implied contract. In some cases an effort has been made to get away from the objectionable features of the salary plan by swinging to the opposite extreme

and placing the salesmen upon a commission basis, but in this connection other difficulties arose. Lack of teamwork among departments, and even among individuals in the same department, developed, and customers were not encouraged to visit other salesmen.

A new solution was proposed by suggesting commissions on certain kinds of goods so that articles which had become slow-moving or were drifting behind the fashions should be pushed out. This was found to work injuriously from the fact that regular up-to-date lines were neglected and all effort spent on the "spiffs." Buyers for the house sometimes became less careful in their selections because they felt that if a mistake were made, salesmen would get rid of the goods if offered a special commission.

Better than any of the previous plans is that in use in many houses of paying a fixed salary per week, and if the salesman's output exceeds a stated amount, adding a commission of one, two, or more per cent on all sales in excess of that sum. Under this arrangement the salesman feels that he need not be over-anxious to such an extent as to cause him to lose sight of other departments, and yet knows that ambitious effort on his part will receive adequate reward. If a salesman, for example, is paid a salary of fifteen dollars per week in a department where the cost of selling is five per cent, and is assured of two and one half per cent commission on all sales over three hundred dollars,



it would not be at all uncommon to find him selling nine or ten hundred dollars' worth of goods per week, thus making his income run over thirty dollars. Skillful salesmen are often able to reach beyond this.

Some houses make a division of a percentage of the profits for the year among the employees on a basis in which length of service, amount of earnings, and some other conditions form a sliding scale for the determination of each one's share. This practically makes the employees quasi partners in the business and so stimulates the interest of each one in the efficiency and success of all the rest. To this is frequently added the opportunity of investing what savings the salesman has been able to make in shares of stock in the company. He now becomes a real member of the firm; its interests are his; its success adds to his dividends; some part of each sale made in every department is money in his pocket.

**Stimulation of Sales.** Various plans of more or less value and success are put into practice from time to time to stimulate salesmen to extra effort. Contests among departments with a banquet or picnic to the winning one sometimes arouse much enthusiasm. Contests among individual salesmen in which the winner is rewarded with a prize, a special vacation, a trip, or a promotion have been used to advantage. An organization of the individual salesmen standing highest for the preceding month in all the departments of the

house forms a standing challenge to the other salesmen to outsell the members of this "topnotchers' club" and so displace some one for membership in the following month.

**Temptations to the Salesman.** The salesman will frequently be offered chances to invest a few dollars by those who will paint a roseate picture of future rise to several times the present selling price. Others will bring to his attention "sure things" and questionable methods of "scalping the market" or "beating the game." The man on the road is likely to meet some one who has a plausible scheme for working the public or some part of it while keeping within the confines of the law. To any and all these get-rich-quick phases of finance he should turn a deaf ear. They are the siren song which will land his little craft among the rocks of debt, despair, and lost self-respect.

"Chances of a lifetime" are dangerous quagmires which will have to be avoided much more frequently than their authors assert. Speculation on margin is a form of gambling which contains about as much promise as the roulette wheel. It is a "good thing" for the one who manipulates it and takes in the winnings.

The young salesman, and more particularly the young saleswoman, is likely to spend all that is earned, and sometimes to go even a little beyond, because credit can be secured and some creditors will wait. This forms a habit which will keep the one who has it

always on the rack. Advice is said to be cheap, but it has often been stored up at a cost to the one who gives it of a very high-priced experience. If the recipient will consider it carefully, it is likely to save him the expense of the same kind of instruction. That one should live within his income is perhaps a truism, but the salesman should do better than that. Whatever he receives, *a definite part of it should be set aside regularly in a savings account.* The unforeseen and the unexpected will come. Want of a reserve fund stands like a menacing shadow over the improvident.

**Order of Promotion.** New recruits on the sales force sometimes become impatient and feel that they are lost in the large number of other workers of the same kind. If promotion or increase of salary does not come within a short time, some grow dissatisfied and pass on to other houses or other kinds of work. While there are exceptions to the following as well as to all other generalities, the rule is that those who come to stay reap the rewards of patience and permanence, while those who continually shift from house to house never climb high on the ladder of promotion. Above the heads of these inferior and mediocre clerks who form the drift, rises the individual salesman who shows himself superior to the general run.

The first promotion will probably land him in the position of *head of stock*. Here the test of the qualities

which made him a good salesman will be a little more exacting. If a knowledge of stock is essential for the success of a salesman, it is very much more so in the higher place to which he has risen. His responsibility has extended also, and he will find new burdens with the new outlook and the advance in salary.

Having shown that his powers are sufficiently developed, the next step will find him an *assistant buyer*. Here he becomes an understudy to the buyer, from whom he should learn in every possible way. Gradually he will find the routine work of the buyer falling to him, and occasionally he will be given a trial in a new direction to test his judgment and skill. Careful and persistent study of the policy of his house will help much toward the next advance when the way is open. As he stands upon the threshold it is quite important to take a glance at some of the qualifications necessary to the *buyer*. He may have been sure that his integrity was storm-proof, but here it will be assailed by all kinds of efforts by outside salesmen to secure his favor. He will be offered meals and other forms of entertainment, bribes in the form of special commissions, transportation, presents so skillfully masked that rejection looks highly discourteous, samples to be tested by his own personal use, and numerous other forms of inducements. To all of these he must stand impregnable.

The buyer must know the stock of the departments for which he buys as a mother knows her children.

He must know which goods move out rapidly and which are slow, and be governed by the comparative percentage of profit earned by the different classes of merchandise. His observation of "shorts" must be accurate and prompt so that customers do not get the impression that his house is not well stocked. The community is to him a book to be read for information as to changes of nationality and therefore of requirements; financial conditions and the consequent rise or fall in the demand for credit; tendency in the direction of fashions and what will satisfy them; rise of new industries or disintegration of old and the consequent changes in purchasing power.

With all this in mind he will be sent to the great wholesale, jobbing, or manufacturing concerns of America and Europe, his expenses being paid, once, twice, or several times per year, to replenish the stock of his house. Here he will see a profusion of attractive merchandise. He will be filled with the enthusiastic demonstrations of the skilled representatives from whom he buys. He should be sure to arrange and to catalogue this information in his own mind or on paper so thoroughly that upon his return he can assemble the salesmen of his own house and pass on to them a large part of the same skill and enthusiasm for their use in presenting these goods to the customers.

A department store buyer found on one of his trips a lot of silks of an unusual quality. He became convinced of their superiority and

arranged for the purchase of the entire output of the factory. Returning to his house, he brought together the entire sales force of the silk department, and told them what he had done. In glowing words he roused their enthusiasm, and delighted them by showing samples in all colors. He closed his address by a statement which indicated his wisdom and skill in modern merchandising: "No other house will be able to secure any of these silks because we have bought all of them. You have seen the exceptional quality and beauty of the goods, and now I shall tell you what we intend to do in the matter of price. We intend to give our customers the full benefit of our saving," and he named a selling-price which proved the truth of his final assertion.

**Purchase of an Interest in the House.** As the opportunity is given and his savings make it possible, the salesman who is wise can become a stockholder in the company for which he has been working. This will add to the confidence which the house has in him, and to his efficiency, and it will become the best possible kind of insurance as he increases his holdings from time to time. It is no wild stretch of the imagination for the young man or young woman of ambition and ability to look to the executive offices of the company and outline a course whose goal is one of the desks located there. One more step may intervene between the position of buyer and this goal. This is the *merchandiser* who represents the interests of the proprietors and has general oversight of both buying and selling.

**Going into Business for Himself.** In the establishment of a branch store the house often selects one of its capable salesmen or buyers to take charge of the

new venture as manager. In some cases an inefficient owner of an outside business has allowed his affairs to get away from him and the house has an opportunity to take the business over and place it in the hands of one who has won the confidence and esteem of the executives. The salesman on the road frequently finds a poorly managed store somewhere on his route. Usually the owner is not only willing but glad to sell it at a price and on terms which a prudent and frugal salesman can meet. These are a few of the ways in which the salesman may eventually enter the field of merchandising under his own name.

**The Open Road Ahead.** Salesmanhip may be made drudgery or the practice of a profession. It may be merely a means of making a living, or of doing good to every one with whom the salesman comes in contact. Every salesman has an opportunity of raising or lowering his calling in the estimation of the prospect he meets. If he goes with an honest desire to do a good turn to each one with whom he does business, to improve business conditions, to add to a high ethical standard, to be square with his house and sympathetic with his customers, he will become a credit to his profession and a success in the best sense of the word. The only limit upon his future is that placed there by his character, ability, and determination.





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